

# CHRISTIAN COURIER

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**Hide and seek in the  
thunderstorm ... p. 12**

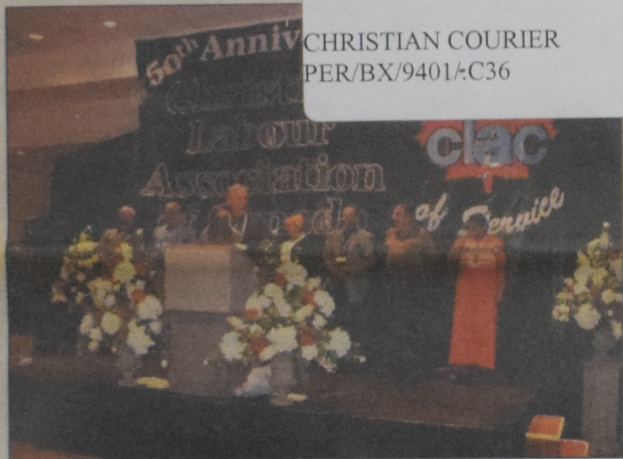
**Why go to church? To  
accomplish praise ... p. 14**

58th year of publication

## Christian Labour Association of Canada celebrates 50 years of growth

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CLAC Stewards being recognized by Neil Roos (CLAC executive director, at microphone), for their many years of service.

### Alan Doerksen

KELOWNA, B.C. — In its 50 years of existence, the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) has seen tremendous growth, but has also faced more than its share of obstacles. But as

three CLAC leaders point out, the association has stayed true to its Christian roots, despite changes going on outside and within it.

Harry Antonides was on staff with CLAC for 35 years, from 1962 to 1997. But his involvement



CHRISTIAN COURIER FILES

Harry Antonides

started with the very beginnings of CLAC, back in 1952, when he was a member at the local level in Sarnia, Ont. At CLAC's recent national conference in Kelowna, B.C., Sept. 2 to 4, Antonides was chosen to become a member of CLAC's national board.

Reflecting on CLAC's 50 years

of history, Antonides admits, "When we started 50 years ago, in 1952, we weren't sure we were going to make it.... That was a very difficult beginning."

One of the first obstacles CLAC faced came in 1954, when an application for certification for the employees of the Ontario company Bosch and Keuning was denied on technical grounds by the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB). That board went out of its way to point out that it felt CLAC's constitution was discriminatory because it was based on Christian principles, reports the *Guide*, a CLAC publication. Later on, CLAC was also denied labor union status by B.C.'s labor board.

### Key turning point

But a key turning point for CLAC came in 1963, when



PHOTOS COURTESY CLAC (3)

Ray Pennings, chair of the Work Research Foundation

Supreme Court of Ontario Chief Justice J. C. McRuer overturned the OLRB decision, and granted CLAC trade union status in Ontario. "There was no legal evidence on which the Board could

See **DESPITE** page 2...



International guests at the CLAC conference take a boat tour around Kelowna, B.C.

## World Council of Churches makes drastic internal changes, addresses world conflicts

GENEVA (ENI) — Faced with huge shortfalls over the next year, The World Council of Churches is making painful cutbacks in staff. Income projection for the next year have been revised downward by almost 6 million Swiss francs, and the old projections had already anticipated a deficit.

Seeking to save both jobs and programs, a separate report from the WCC's program committee suggested such cost-saving measures as using "seconded" staff from member churches for some tasks, contracting out for some

services and using less expensive workers, such as interns, retired staff members and "voluntary missionaries."

Other measures that could be explored, the committee added, were shorter and less frequent meetings, smaller committees, the contribution of frequent flyer miles and the possibility of corporate or private funding of WCC events.

The central committee agreed to cut the WCC's projected expenditure for 2003 from an initial figure of CHF 47 million to CHF 40.4

million [The Swiss franc is almost equivalent to the Canadian dollar.]

### Catastrophic situation

The situation is "more catastrophic perhaps than any of us can imagine," said Bishop Hans Gerny of the Old Catholic Church of Switzerland. Even very large churches "with representatives in high positions whose churches and lifestyles do not look poor" made no contribution to the WCC's finances, he said, without naming any churches.

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## News

# Despite opposition, CLAC stays true to Christian identity

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base its findings that the union was discriminatory within the meaning of the statute," said McRuer at the time.

"That was a major breakthrough," asserts Antonides. If CLAC were to start now, rather than 50 years ago, he doubts if it could get a similar court decision in its favor.

Another difficult point for CLAC came in 1958, when most of the national executive committee of CLAC proposed a constitutional amendment that would meet labor board concerns but water down the union's basis, reports the *Guide*. The amendment was defeated 32-18, and several CLAC leaders, including general-secretary Frans Fuykschot, resigned. Later that same year, Fuykschot helped start a rival union: The Christian Trade Unions of Canada (CTUC).

But in an unusual reversal, CLAC and CTUC were reunited in 1979. Antonides sees that reunion as a very positive thing – something rarely seen when churches or denominations split.

## Battlescars

Ray Pennings, who has worked with CLAC for the past 11 years, also sees the 1963 court decision as an important turning point for CLAC. Pennings has just moved on from CLAC to become the chair of the Work Research Foundation (WRF). CLAC has faced many battles over the years, Pennings asserts, "and we all have battlescars to show for it."

## Opposition made them better

"We had a period of very sustained opposition in the 1990s," notes Pennings. "Other organizations tried to knock us down." One example was an Internet website which made slanderous statements about CLAC. But on March 19 of this year, the B.C. Supreme Court declared that such statements made against CLAC on a website are defamatory and slanderous, reports the *Guide*. The decision sent a clear message that CLAC will take action against those who publish lies about it.



PHOTOS COURTESY CLAC (2)

CLAC staff and convention speakers from 1964. From left: Dr. Evan Runner, Gerald Vandezande, Cal Seerveld, Harry Antonides.

Such opposition "had the effect of making us better," observes Pennings.

Over the years, CLAC has grown considerably, and its identity has changed in some ways, says Antonides. At its beginning, CLAC focused on "building a Christian foundation. Now most of the effort goes into doing a good job as a union rep" for specialized businesses and trades. CLAC has gradually put more work into training of stewards, retirement plans and benefits for its members, he adds.

## True to Christian roots

But Antonides asserts that CLAC has stayed true to its Christian foundation. "There is continuity, I say." CLAC is still "able to provide leadership with a Christian worldview as an alternative" to what he calls the "dog-eat-dog" mainstream labor movement. CLAC "tries to break through the hostility between labor and

management."

## Called to co-operate

CLAC's Christian perspective makes it distinct from other labor unions in Canada, says Antonides. "We believe the Christian faith addresses all issues of life – how we relate to fellow workers, to employers. They're called to co-operate, and to share the benefits and rewards of labor fairly." CLAC also believes "that work can be experienced as a meaningful, rewarding activity. All work should have some measure of responsibility and reward."

Pennings observes that CLAC started from a European model of a labor union, but "to implement that in a North American context [was like] putting a square peg in a round hole." But CLAC has adjusted and improved over the years. "We do a better job today than a decade ago," says Pennings.

CLAC has stayed true to its Christian identity, asserts

Pennings. "I think in terms of Christian values, they run front and centre." This is reflected in regular employee training sessions "exclusively focused on worldview," he explains.

Comparing CLAC to mainstream unions, Pennings says, "Fundamentally, the approach CLAC takes is workers are partners in the enterprise, working together with employers to make the 'pie' bigger. Many unions are preoccupied with drawing a line in the pie." Rather, CLAC wants "a fair division of the rewards of that pie."

CLAC is not confrontational like other some unions. "It takes a lot more skill to solve a problem than to fight," says Pennings.

The past 11 years in particular have been "a time of remarkable growth," says Pennings. In that time the union has grown from 8,000 to nearly 30,000 members. "The reason we've grown is we provide quality service to our members."

## A major player

John Sutherland, CLAC's B.C. director of public affairs, notes that "in some sectors, we've become one of the major players." Examples are the Save-On stores in Alberta – all of which are represented by CLAC – some commercial construction businesses in B.C., and long-term care homes in Ontario.

Although CLAC's strong Christian worldview is "certainly intact," Sutherland says the union has "become less dependent on the Reformed community."

Sutherland sees one distinctive of CLAC as being "our view of social justice. Social justice from a

mainstream union point of view means getting more for their members, and being an agent for change in society." Often that means a left-wing agenda for mainstream unions. CLAC is "non-partisan, politically," he adds.

Another CLAC distinctive is "we feel it's possible to grow unions and management together in partnership."

Originally, CLAC did a fair bit of theorizing related to the labor movement. But since the Work Research Foundation (WRF) was set up and registered as a charitable organization in 1974, it has taken over much of CLAC's research and educational work. Since then, CLAC has held some joint conferences with WRF, which have produced several books, observes Antonides.

## A duty to be faithful

Looking ahead, Antonides asserts that CLAC has "a duty to continue to be faithful to our Christian starting point. We have to pay a lot of attention to that."

One challenge CLAC faces is attracting younger people into its ranks, he notes.

Another one is "continued growth and the challenges it brings," says Sutherland.

To mark its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, CLAC has held celebratory events last spring in B.C., Alberta and Ontario. From Sept. 4 to 6, CLAC held a national stewards conference in Kelowna, B.C., which included a celebration of CLAC's 50 years and "a special emphasis on what has sustained us for 50 years," says Sutherland. CLAC has also recently published a special 50th anniversary issue of the *Guide*.



CLAC's national board and staff from 1964. CC readers might recognize former manager Stan De Jong (top, fourth from right). Also featured are Harry Antonides (top, fifth from right), Ed Vanderkloet (top, third from right), and Gerald Vandezande (front left).

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## News/Politics

# Two Christian agencies to share one leader, one office



SAMARITAN'S PURSE PHOTOS

Sean Campbell onsite at a Samaritan's Purse project in El Salvador.

## Alan Doerksen

CALGARY – Two well-known Christian agencies in Canada will now be working more closely together – in more ways than one. Samaritan's Purse (SP) and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) are constructing a new office building in Calgary, which the two ministries will share. Also, BGEA recently chose Sean Campbell, the executive director of SP, to become the new executive director of BGEA.

These are not the only connections between the two agencies. Franklin Graham, who has served as president of SP in the U.S. since 1979, is also the president of BGEA in the U.S. At a board meeting of BGEA Canada in late August, Graham was elected chairman of its board of directors.

At that same board meeting, BGEA Canada decided to move its offices from Winnipeg to Calgary, where SP is already based.

Campbell, the new executive director of BGEA, will continue to lead SP, as well. "The past 14 years

as executive director of Samaritan's Purse-Canada have been both exciting and humbling," said Campbell, in a BGEA press release. "I look forward to embracing this new challenge of leadership with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. This organization has many wonderful friends and partners across this country, and I'm tremendously excited at the prospect of working together with them to share the message of Christ."

## A heart for evangelism

"I have known Sean Campbell for more than 20 years, and he has a great heart for evangelism and the capacity to provide excellent leadership to both organizations," Franklin Graham told BGEA. "Also, by consolidating the two ministries in Calgary it makes both organizations more efficient and effective."

The Samaritan's Purse and BGEA Canada will continue to operate as separate organizations. But the agencies will be sharing offices and some staff, explains Campbell to *Christian Courier*. "We can save money on costs of administration that way." Communications and information systems staff will be shared by the agencies.

Although SP and BGEA share some similarities, they have different goals and approaches in their ministries. For BGEA, "their greatest thrust has been two-fold:

through festivals of evangelism ... and training of evangelists," says Campbell. Each year, the agency hosts two evangelism training programs, one in Toronto each summer, and one in Lake Louise, Alta., each fall. "BGEA in Canada wants to be very pro-active and find more ways to encourage the local church in evangelism efforts." It has "always been associated with the proclamation of the gospel."

## Compassionate side of Gospel

While BGEA represents the proclamation of the Gospel, SP represents its compassionate, caring side, "with no less a focus on

the Gospel," observes Campbell. SP's work tends to focus on relief and development projects, such as the well-known Operation Christmas Child program. The agency often works in difficult countries for Christians, such as Afghanistan and Sudan. But unlike some Christian aid agencies, SP makes a point of sharing the Gospel with people it helps, on an unconditional basis.

Campbell quotes Franklin Graham as saying, "My father's been called to coliseums – I've been called to gutters."

Campbell says building a new headquarters for both agencies in Calgary will be a 14-month process. "We want to do this carefully

and wisely."

Founded in 1950, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association is a nondenominational organization that reaches millions of people each year through Billy Graham Missions, Franklin Graham Festivals, *Decision* magazine, "The Hour of Decision" and "Decision Today" radio programs, and World Wide Pictures. BGEA-Canada began operation in 1953. Samaritan's Purse was founded in 1970 by Dr. Bob Pierce and Franklin Graham appointed as its president in 1979. Samaritan's Purse became incorporated in Canada in 1973 and moved its headquarters from Toronto to Calgary in 1990.

## Colson's a mighty servant of God



## Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

One year ago, shortly after the September 11 attacks, I began receiving and reading Charles Colson's Breakpoint commentaries at the suggestion of a former student of mine. Colson was a member of U.S. President Richard Nixon's White House some 30 years ago and gained a deserved reputation for ruthlessness in dealing with his employer's political enemies. He had once said, notoriously, that he would trample underfoot his own grandmother for Nixon's sake.

Colson was eventually undone by the Watergate scandal, which brought down his president and led to seven months imprisonment for his own part in the scandal. Shortly before his incarceration, in 1973, Colson was converted to the cause of Jesus Christ, a life-changing turn-around that gained a fair measure of media attention at the time. I recall being skeptical of the sincerity of his transformation due to a spate of celebrity conversions being publicized by the Christian community which ended up fading after a short while. But a few years later I heard Colson speak in person and knew he was the genuine article.

## Putting feet to his faith

Since then, Colson has gone on to an amazing number of accomplishments that have put feet to his faith and made him one of the more visible Christian leaders in North America. Shortly after his release from prison, he founded Prison Fellowship Ministries, one of the largest organizations of its kind, reaching out to prisoners and their families. In 1983 he established Justice Fellowship, with the aim of reforming the criminal justice system in the United States, including the incorporation of biblical principles of restitution and restoration. Prison Fellowship expanded its concern for prisoners to include their families through its Angel Tree program, which provides Christmas gifts and summer camp opportunities to children of prisoners.

In 1991 Colson introduced "Breakpoint," a brief daily radio commentary attempting to bring the insights of a Christian worldview to the cultural and political issues of our day. His most recent book, *How Now Shall We Live?*, written with

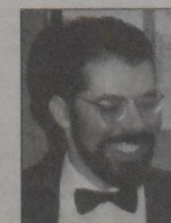
Nancy Pearcey, represents an attempt to get Christians to think through the ramifications of their faith for the way they live in God's world, including their participation in the larger society. In this respect, Colson has inherited the mantle of the late Francis Schaeffer, whose work and writings in the 1960s and '70s spurred many Christians to think through the cultural implications of their religion.

## 'Evangelicals and Catholics Together'

Yet, while Schaeffer's efforts were sometimes seen to be tainted by a certain anti-Catholic attitude, Colson, a Baptist, has undertaken, along with Fr. Richard John Neuhaus, an initiative called "Evangelicals and Catholics Together," an unofficial process of dialogue that has led to the formulation of more than one consensus document by participants, the most recent of which, "Your Word Is Truth," explores the relationship between scripture and tradition.

After last September 11, Colson aired a Breakpoint series on the Islamic worldview, focusing on its differences with Christianity. His commentaries were not intended as policy advice to his nation's leaders in dealing with Islamist terrorism. Rather, they were aimed at his fellow Christians as they witnessed with their lives and words to their Muslim neighbors on a day-to-day basis. More recently Colson has taken on the "selfist philosophy," a school of psychotherapy in which "personal growth" and the flourishing of the self become the overriding criteria for living up to commitments to others.

Colson is evidently a mighty servant of God whose faith has borne tremendous fruit, particularly in the lives of the vulnerable and outcasts. In a future column I shall explore and evaluate some of the ideas expressed in his Breakpoint commentaries.



David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario. He last heard Colson speak at a conference at Calvin Seminary in October 1998.



Franklin Graham, who now directs the international offices of both Samaritan's Purse and BGEA.



## Editorial

# Strikes, rituals and our blood-stained earth

Harry der Nederlanden

Reading about the 50th anniversary of the Christian Labour Association of Canada led me to reminisce about some of my earliest experiences with labor unions. I remember as a teenager taking the Beverly bus downtown with my dad to go to an organizational meeting for the CLAC in the basement of one of the Edmonton churches. That was in the late '50s. Maybe I didn't understand much of it at the time, but I was curious, and in those days you were flattered if your dad invited you to go along to something that seemed "adults only." My memories of the meeting are vague, but I do recall my dad being disgusted at the meagre turnout.

## A concrete touchstone

The CLAC magazine, *The Guide*, was sent to me free of charge all through my college days, first at Dordt and later at Calvin, and it always served as a concrete touchstone for our abstract student speculation and theorizing. During my second year at Dordt, Gerald Vandezande addressed the student body, and I was so turned on, I seriously considered tossing aside my Greek and Latin books and offering to become his apprentice. With no pay, if necessary. But more rational heads prevailed.

It was an honor to me, then, when a few years ago as part of the staff of the local Christian school, I could finally become a genuine member of the CLAC. Others felt very differently, however. That supporters of Christian schools could so violently oppose the CLAC — after all

the sacrifices and persecution their fellows went through to establish that organization — still mystifies me to this day.

## Lots of speculation about motives

What motivates a Christian community — or any community — at different times often simply resists analysis and understanding. In the middle of the brouhaha about the organization of the staff, there was lots and lots of speculation about motives — from both sides — often having to do with power, keeping it or getting it. But that always struck me as rather superficial stuff. Often people, singly and in groups, but especially in the mass, are driven by motives that are unclear even to themselves, by dramas that seize them in the dark depths of the soul.

When I ran out of money after two years of college and couldn't go back, I ended up working underground in the nickel mines at Ft. Thompson, Manitoba. What drove me there, I'm not sure. Humiliation? Escape? Adventure?

The only way to get up there was by train, a very slow train. Apparently, the ground up there moves a lot as the train passes over it, so the train sort of tiptoes all the way north from The Pas to Churchill, on Hudson's Bay. In the '60s, Churchill was still a port for shipping western wheat to Russia and other northern countries. In the summer, the earth is not solid up there. You could walk into a clearing in the woods and jump up and down, and the ground would ripple like pudding all around you for some ten feet in all directions.

## In the middle of a wildcat strike

To work in the mine, I had to sign up with the United Mine Workers. However, agents from the Steel Workers of America were circulating, cooking up mischief. A few weeks after my arrival, I found myself in the middle of a wildcat strike.

No one seemed to be very clear about the reason for it, but that was partly due to the fact that everyone seemed to be just a little sloshed. There were suspicious quantities of free beer being passed around, especially on the picket line, which wasn't much of a line actually, more of a carnival. Questions yielded some racist talk about teaching the rich Jews in New York a lesson or some vague class-warfare prattle about defying the bosses, but few had any real grievances. Everybody seemed quite happy with the pay scale.

After mingling with the milling strikers awhile, I came to the conclusion that the wildcat strike had probably been started by a few agents from the raiding Steel Workers union, and that everyone else had joined in mostly because they were eager for a few days off to carouse and let off steam.

## Crossing the picket line

Going back to the barracks, I told my Danish roommate I was going to work. He became quite alarmed and told me I'd get beat up if the strikers caught me. "They're too drunk to catch anybody," I said and headed for the gate.

First, I tried circling around the fence, but even where the boxcars entered the mine area there were picketers. And some were carrying pieces of two-by-four. So I went back to the main gate and mingled with the picketers, slowly backing through. "Hey, where you going?" one guy shouted as I turned and began walking in. "Get some of my stuff," I shouted back across my shoulder. And I was through.

Getting back to my barracks, after doing a shift with a couple of Greeks and some foremen, was going to be trickier than getting in. After delaying a while, I sauntered

back to the gate and the picket line. Darkness was coming on. But as I approached the milling crowd, someone yelled, "Scab, scab!" And another voice chimed in, "Scab, scab!"

Some fellows I'd met on the train were pointing at me and shouting. They'd had quite a bit of beer by this time and looked quite happy. But other eyes were also trained on me. So I waved and then pointed back at them and also started shouting, "Scabs, scabs!" More people took up the refrain, pointing this way and that and shouting, "Scabs, scabs," and some other things as well. Miners have a surprisingly large vocabulary.

## Transformed from a scab into a picketer

A moment later I had joined my 'friends' and we were punching and pushing each other around and I was transformed from a scab into a picketer.

The 'picketing' went on well into the night, so the next morning the picketers were too far gone to notice me walk through the gate. There weren't enough miners to muster a crew, however, and the mine was closed down.

"What will happen now?" I asked the foreman, a deeply wrinkled, grey-haired man who looked like a cowboy.

"They'll close the barracks and everyone who doesn't live in town will leave," he said matter-of-factly. "Then we'll have a meeting and vote. The mine will be re-opened and we'll get back to work."

The town of Ft. Thompson was not very large, so most of the miners and refinery workers lived in barracks. The mine was the only source of employment, so for those who owned homes there and had families, a long strike was not very likely. Especially since there were really no major grievances.

## The strike made no sense at all

A few days later, a special train packed with thousands of workers, many drunk, was slowly crawling southward to disperse the unemployed passengers across Canada. The strike made no sense at all. Yet, few of the men expressed regret. If they did, it was because they were going home with little or no money in their pockets. Going on strike, it seems, was a meaningful, manly thing to do — even though it accomplished nothing — less than nothing. It was folly.

As I am writing this, television and the newspapers are filled with images of 9-11 and the solemn ceremonies and rituals to commemorate that dreadful event. As I watch the firemen and policemen and other participants slowly, heavily, gravely trudge toward Ground Zero for the ceremonies, I am struck by how similar their movements are to the way they trudged in and out of the dust and debris a year earlier. As if they were walking underwater, in slow motion, or like the astronauts on the moon. They were walking into another world, one so strange to them they were stunned with strangeness.

Americans are not a people known for ritual and ceremony. They are pragmatic, informal, and like to get down to brass tacks. Yet, these rituals of grieving and remembrance are necessary to complete the deep drama of the soul. Without them, without enacting the deep cosmic patterns of guilt, blood and forgiveness, we will end up enacting other more violent, bloody, destructive rituals that make no sense in the long run.

We move in a world stranger, more mysterious than we know. We need the work of God and of angels to cleanse us and to restore us to sanity. The blood-stained ground cries out, and we must tread carefully upon it.

## Christian Courier

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## Letters

## What motivates Hielema's America-bashing?

Harry Antonides' observations in respect to regular contributor Hielema are appreciated (CC, Aug 26). As for me, I had long since given up on the Hielema style and absence of merit.

Perhaps there is some contamination in Tweed drinking water stimulating waking up each morning with a frown and a growl instead of a smile. How else explain uncommon motivation for — if not dedication to — repeated irresponsible America-bashing?

How sad that one apparently does not take the time nor has an inclination to smell the roses which continue to bloom even in this less than perfect world, which, the last I heard, still belongs to God. The CRC's 1986 "Contemporary Testimony" counsels us correctly and realistically that there are many forms of government in that world. After expressing thanks for the freedoms we — and others — enjoy, we are called upon to "work for" the liberty of those "who live under oppression," so that they, too, may "live without fear." That is precisely what is reflected in

and implied by U.S. anti-terrorism policy.

### Not that nice

Mr. Antonides is much more sensitive and thoughtful than I can ever hope to be. I commend him for the example he sets as a Christian observer and commentator. I'm just not that nice.

What alarms me is the possible effect of the bitter Hielema musings. History has shown that British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's 1938 "Peace For Our Time" speech after the Munich Agreement, led to the — in retrospect — disastrous widely supported initial policy of appeasement, which amounted to advocating sleeping with the devil.

### Don't let history repeat itself

I do not at the moment recall whom I am to cite for the quotation, "All that is necessary for evil to persist, is for good men to do nothing," but it appears apt. I am grateful that President Bush, his administration, and — hopefully

— Congress, cannot be counted amongst the latter. There are other examples of inaction, such as Hungary and Angola, to name but two. I, for one, do not want history to repeat itself.

The point is, throughout my lifetime and as a Canadian, I have been grateful for our neighbor south of the 49th parallel, its people, its institutional representatives and even its various administrations. I have in a former official capacity worked co-operatively with them throughout the world and I have lived amongst and worshiped with them on their home soil.

This, so that Mr. Hielema is able to get up in the morning in Tweed — as grouchy as that may possible be — drink yet another glass of water and in relative peace compose his accusatory nonsense and ridicule.

As for me and my house, thank God for the United States of America, even with its imperfections and shortcomings akin to those within ourselves!

Ralph L. De Groot  
Peterborough, Ont.

## Political correctness stifles proper debate

One of the more amusing and entertaining aspects of reading the *Christian Courier* are Bert Hielema's News Comment and the inevitable written repercussions that follow in subsequent issues.

Bert, in his vociferous fallibility is a pleasure to read. Others — and lately Harry Antonides — (CC Aug. 26) whose compulsive attempts at political (Christian) correctness, and perhaps sense of discovered infallibility, are finding

it necessary to make and/or suggest corrections to certain statements or style. Political correctness stifles proper debate, or better, it stifles debate, period. Both Bert and Harry have the right to be different. One could consider both to be correct.

### The essence of freedom

To be different "good" or "bad" is not the point; The exercise of daring to be different is the essence

of freedom. To dismiss that exercise is to deny personal freedom.

The conclusion then is obvious: Allow the individual reader to decide how to process all written material provided for mental and spiritual challenges.

"Nothing here below is profane for those who know how to see. On the contrary everything is sacred." Teilhard de Chardin.

Gerard Luimes  
Edmonton, Alta.

## Thanks to Matth Cupido

Re: "An artist's gift to the CRC" (CC, August 26).

As a fellow artist, I wish to publicly comment and thank Matth Cupido for his generous gift to us all. I only hope the original pictures will receive their due — financially as well as in terms of where they will find a permanent home. May I suggest the new seminary of the

CRC, to inspire and stimulate those who will be bringing the good news to a world in waiting.

May they serve to encourage preachers to preach less (use fewer words) because, to use an old cliché, a picture is worth a thousand words. The use of visuals in sermons is a device much underused by preachers, particu-

larly when you consider that a visual image has a much longer staying power in a person's memory.

Therefore, allow me to thank Matth again, for these pictures are much more than visual sermons.

Thank you and God bless,

George Langbroek  
St. Catharines, Ont.

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## Seniors project developed with energy and Christian spirit

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## Letter/Opinion

## Reader feels more threatened than protected by U.S.

In your paper I read two letters wherein the writers are very upset about the tone and style of articles by Bert Hielema. Many of them deal with U.S. policies and the Bush administration. Both John Bolt (May 8) and Harry Antonides (Aug. 29) are hurt by that.

They remind Hielema how thankful we ought to be for the role the U.S. has played in the past. The liberation of Europe from the tyranny of Hitler. How could somebody forget who was there at that time? Even I, who was 11 years old, when it all ended, will never forget. Both Bolt and Antonides seem still to be content with the role the U.S. is playing today in the world. They see the U.S. as our protector in the war on terrorism.

### World is in great danger

Do they not see that the whole world is in great danger with a superpower that does not feel bound by international law? That uses its great economic and military power to force its will on the rest? Whose president will use nuclear power first if he thinks it is needed? How can we feel comfortable in a world where the rich get richer and the poor poorer? Has the U.S. nothing to do with that?

In your paper I read an article about evangelicals that seem to wake up and speak out. They wrote

President Bush that they disagree with his Middle East policies. I admire them for their courage. That gives me hope!

Antonides writes that everything is not lost, that probably more than 7,000 remain who do not bow their knee before Baal. But do our church leaders who remain silent belong in that group?

In the *Banner* was an article by David Hoekema, "Does Terrorism Rule out Pacifism?" which also gives me hope. But to me it all seems so little and so late.

Why didn't all Christian leaders unite a year ago and warn against more violence?

The U.S. seems now almost ready for another war with Iraq. Allegedly Hussein is producing weapons of mass destruction. Are they more dangerous in his hands than in the hands of President Bush? I feel more threatened by the U.S. than protected today.

Let us hope and pray that war will be prevented.

During the war in Holland, our church leaders found time and energy to split the church. The same thing is happening here. When will we be transformed into Christians in word and deed?

Thanks be to God, Christ came to save sinners!

Hans Katerberg  
Gowanston, Ont.

## York Campus Ministry

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## Visions and dreams

Tony Campolo

Even though I am a social scientist by trade, I have concerns about the ways in which many, not all, psychologists understand people.

Both the behaviorists and the neo-Freudians have a tendency to explain who and what we are by delving into our past histories. There are general assumptions by the behaviorists that we're sophisticated versions of Pavlov's dogs, and that how we act is simply the result of how we have been conditioned to behave. The neo-Freudians lead us to believe that we are the result of our past experiences, and that deliverance from psychological maladies can be had by gaining insight into how faulty socialization or traumas have created our present states of mind.

### Past is not the sole determiner

It's not that I deny that the past does highly influence who and what we are today. It's just that I am convinced that the past is not the sole determiner of who we are, and what we are. I believe that what we commit ourselves to in the future is more important than anything that may have happened in our yesterdays. I spend a lot of time working with troubled urban kids who have had horrendous past experiences. In many instances, their parents have been abominable and their lives have been devoid of loving nurture. There are teenage girls in some of our programs who have been marched over by armies. If I believed that their past experiences were determinative I would throw in the towel, but I don't. I am convinced that the future can be more important than the past, and that where a person decides to go in life matters far more than where he or she has been.

Human beings are different from all the animals created in that we are capable of imagining the future. We are able to dream dreams and have visions of what we want to become. What we decide to be as we imagine our tomorrows can overcome the agonies of the past and present.

Victor Frankl, a onetime disciple of Freud, was arrested and put in Auschwitz. While in the concentration camp, Frankl carefully studied his fellow inmates and tried to figure out the differences between those who survived the terrible suffering and those who succumbed and died. All other agonizing factors being equal, he found that what was more prevalent among the survivors was that they



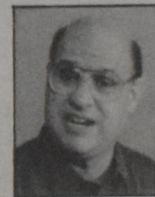
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*Like Don Quixote, we need dreams.*

could imagine a life when the horrors of Auschwitz would be over. It was their hope for the future, rather than their experiences in the past that enabled them to endure present sufferings.

### Hope is the essence of faith

Being hopeful about the future is the essence of what it means to be a person of faith. The Bible says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the essence of things not seen (Heb. 11:1). When I counsel people, I always want to know their dreams and visions for the future and I ask what they are doing to make those dreams and visions become reality. I know that the prophet Joel once said that when the young no longer have dreams and the old no longer have visions, the people perish. More than "paralysis in analysis" we all need something of Don Quixote. We need dreams! Even impossible dreams. Because what we believe can be by the grace of God. What ultimately determines who we are is the here and now.



Tony Campolo teaches at Eastern University in St. David's, Penn. His website address is: [www.tonycampolo.com](http://www.tonycampolo.com)

## Should a 'moral majority' respect minority views?

Christian students protest having to read the Koran at a public university. Others write their representatives, especially Christian ones, to preserve in law the Christian view of marriage. A Christian printer is fined for refusing to print material for a homosexual rights group. Do Christian citizens in all cases act responsibly when they seek privileged status for their own beliefs? What do you think? To launch the discussion, we reprint an article by Gerald Vandezande that appeared a few years ago in *The Catalyst*.

Gerald Vandezande

It happens time and again. While discussing our country's current affairs, more and more Christians lament the widening differences in life-perspectives and values. They worry that the vital meaning of living Christian faith is losing its cultural influence. As well, people of many different faiths rightly wonder what might be done to stem the rising tide of secularism — the ideology that expresses itself so powerfully in individualism (when it comes to questions of motive) and materialism

(when it comes to the economy).

Some of these concerned Christians, including certain politicians, contend that our society is rapidly becoming "morally bankrupt."

"Our governments should do something about all these groups who push their different views and ways of life," they argue.

"They show no real regard for our unique history or for the fact that Canada is a Christian country. Our governments should protect and promote our Christian heritage and values. Why should they

*Continued on page 7...*



## Opinion/Education/News

## Should a 'moral majority' respect minority views?

... continued from page 6

extend the equal protection and the equal benefit of Canadian law to people who hold different beliefs and practise different lifestyles?"

Quite a few people insist that in a democracy the majority has the right to enshrine in law its own values, and to insist that all citizens, including minorities, respect and obey that law. Even if it violates their basic beliefs or conscience. They argue that non-conformists can change the law through the democratic process, by gaining majority political support for their particular values and lifestyles.

### Absolute majority rules

Perhaps unwittingly, this argument equates political democracy with absolute majority rule. It shows no real respect for the fundamental freedoms and equality rights of minority communities. It allows those in political power to impose and enforce their "moral" values on the rest.

This majoritarian view of democracy is held by many proponents of a common, secular school system. It is also shared by many defenders of a common, Christian public morality. Both groups argue that their particular life-perspectives should be safeguarded in Canadian law.

It appears not to matter to them what other citizens' philosophies of education or views of morality may be. They want minority views to conform with the wishes of the "moral" majority, as defined by election results and opinion polls.

Interestingly, many proponents of a common, secular education philosophy sharply disagree with the defenders of a common, Christian morality, and vice versa. In fact, they often are ideological adversaries, although they base their views of democracy and government on a shared premise: government has the right to implement the demands of the majority, even if this violates the human dignity, fundamental freedom, civil rights and responsibilities of a minority; even if it violates the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

As I understand justice in the

Scriptures, however, government has the duty to deal equitably with all the people, associations, enterprises and institutions within its jurisdiction. The Canadian government is called to be God's servant for the common good of all citizens, to promote and preserve public justice for all.

This governmental responsibility should be exercised judiciously within a framework of law and public policy that protects all and discriminates against none. All Canadians, including minorities, are entitled to legal equality of opportunity and fair treatment. None should be relegated to second-class citizenship, for all of us are created equally in God's likeness and, therefore, all of us are deserving equally of legal respect — even when we have deep disagreements.

Citizens for Public Justice's Guidelines for Christian Political Service put it this way: "Justice, reflecting the Word of God, demands that governments must recognize and deal justly with the diversity of beliefs, convictions, cultures and lifestyles that actually exist in its jurisdiction. Government may not be an agent for enforcing adherence to particular religious beliefs, whether Christian or otherwise. It must protect the ability of different groups, especially minorities, to live in conformity with their own convictions. It must allow for the expression of diversity of such convictions in churches and other confessional bodies, in economics, politics, education, cultural and personal life." (IV, D)

It has been my experience, especially during candid discussions with senior policy-makers, that it is really helpful to recognize:

1. that we live in a pluralistic society in which different people and communities have different beliefs and views and, therefore, should have the legal right and freedom to live in different ways; and
2. that the government has the constitutional responsibility to deal justly with this diversity of faith-convictions and value-communities that constitute the Canadian mosaic, without favoring one at the expense of others.

## Stewards of God's mysteries

I had a student, let's call him Mike, tell me the story of the deconstruction of his faith. He went to a Bible college where some of the professors seems to take diabolical pleasure in undermining simple trust in God and his Word and narrowing the students' worldview so that it excluded everything that cannot be measured by the senses or explained by modern reason.

This student was bright, and at first thought his mind was being broadened. In time, however, his heart told him otherwise: it was being suffocated, and he is now thankfully on the road to spiritual recovery.

In 1 Corinthians 4:1 Paul declares himself to be a "steward of the mysteries of God." What does that mean? The word mystery here does not mean some secret formula, some special knowledge that may enable one to ascend to some new spiritual plane, like the truisms that mark cheap "new age" paperbacks. Paul uses the word "mystery" to refer to something that human understanding cannot discover or explain with its own limited resources. A mystery for Paul is something that God has revealed to us in his grace if we are willing and ready to accept it in faith and trust.

Paul is, of course, directly referring to the gospel, most specifically, God in Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the religious people and foolishness to the academics. In Christ, God scandalizes himself before every nation and people, unveiling himself in love and sacrifice rather than in capricious power or distanced apathy.

Yet, Paul uses the word "mystery" in the plural, so he has more in mind with this term. A cursory survey of the New Testament shows that the word "mystery" is used to refer to such things as: the incarnation (1 Tim. 3:16); Christ as the fulfilment of all history (Eph. 1:9); the resurrection transformation of God's people (1 Cor. 15:51); and the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles (Rom. 11:25). In fact, many of these are the very same things that Mike told me some of his Bible College professors robbed him of. Sure, there is a time for doubt and re-evaluation. But it is a violent act to steal God's mysteries from the imaginative life of a student.

### Bloodhounds for reductionism

I offered a book study this summer at my house on C. S. Lewis' book *Miracles*. There was a general consensus among us that Lewis was right when he said that we must be on guard when we read books that carry naturalistic assumptions. Lewis says:

*You must develop a nose like a bloodhound for those steps in the argument which depend not on historical and linguistic knowledge but on the concealed assumption that miracles are impossible, improbable, or improper. And this means that you must really re-educate yourself: must work hard and consistently to eradicate from your mind the*

## Campus Culture

Peter Schuurman



*whole type of thought in which we have all been brought up. (169)*

So its not just "out there," says Lewis, we all "have it in our bones, and even conversion does not at once work the infection out of our system." (168) It is a "hangover" that affects even the pen of the clergyman.

On that note, incidentally, J. I. Packer praises Dutch theologians as the most academically precise of all in the evangelical tradition, and he recommends Louis Berkhof's systematics before any other ("Unparalleled," he said). But beware, he warns, of the intellectualism that breathes through them, for Dutch theology has the odd habit of divorcing devotion from theologizing. Berkhof writes, perhaps for purposes of mental clarity, as if the living God were not present in the room with him, and this makes his writing cold and dry.

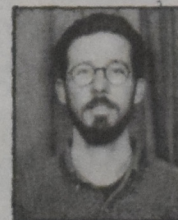
### Yet not Sherlock Holmes

We are stewards of God's mysteries. A rigorous scientific method will not suffice to illumine such mystery. Wendell Berry says in his book *Life is a Miracle: An Essay Against Modern Superstition* that: "if modern science is a religion, then one of its presiding deities must be Sherlock Holmes. To the modern scientist as to the great detective, every mystery is a problem, and every problem can be solved. A mystery can exist only because of human ignorance, and human ignorance is always remediable. The appropriate response is not deference or respect, let alone reverence, but pursuit of 'the answer.'" (27)

For Berry, when mystery disappears, so does humility and the deep sense of the holiness of life. This is the great reductionism that leads to death — death of community, death of our planet, and the death of our own souls.

Paul calls himself a "fool for Christ," a "servant of Christ Jesus" and a "steward of God's mysteries." Humble titles for an apostle, but poetic. G. K. Chesterton says: "The poet only asks to get his head into the heavens. It is the logician who seeks to get the heavens into his head. And it is his head that splits."

In this humble calling is the student's joyful adventure of learning and growing in faith. Through the stewards' eyes, the world is not just "things" to be studied or mastered. All creation glows, brightened from the wide horizon of heaven with the mysteries of God's love in Jesus.



Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed campus chaplain at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont.

## Government appeals court ruling declaring marriage definition invalid

OTTAWA, Ontario, (EP) — The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) recently applauded the federal government of Canada for its decision to appeal the Ontario Divisional Court ruling that declares invalid the definition of marriage as heterosexual.

"The Ontario Divisional Court is the first court in the world to rule that the definition of marriage offends human rights," said Janet Epp Buckingham, general legal counsel for the EFC. "It would have been cavalier for the federal government not to appeal the

Ontario ruling. In October 2001, the British Columbia Supreme Court refused to redefine marriage and ruled that the federal government cannot alter the heterosexual recognition of marriage."

"Our affiliated denominations and churches are deeply disturbed

at the prospect of marriage being unilaterally re-defined by the courts," said Buckingham. "For centuries, religious communities have been celebrating and nurturing marriage. For religious communities marriage is a sacred institution that cannot be redefined.

It is by its very nature the union of a man and a woman."

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## Church

# World Council of Churches tries to reconstruct itself



WCC/ANDREAS SCHOLZER

A wide representation of churches joined the World Council of Churches in Berlin, Germany, in February 2001 to launch the Decade to Overcome Violence.

... continued from page 1

Today's "younger generation is less and less attracted by the search for visible institutional forms of church unity and co-operation," Raiser told the meeting in Geneva, which met from late August to early September.

He said the WCC needed to find ways of associating the various Christian world communions — such as the Lutherans, Reformed churches or Anglicans — and regional and national councils of churches more efficiently.

"A new configuration must overcome the situation that the allegiance to different international or global ecumenical organizations fragments the community of churches in a given place and undermines its potential of growing into a genuine fellowship of churches," said the WCC general secretary. He seems to be suggesting that confessional bodies are draining funds that ought to go to WCC programs; however, he also stressed that at the local level church denominations need to strengthen their "spiritual character and vocation," because this gives "credibility to their 'prophetic' voice."

## No to ecumenical worship

A report from the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation designed to repair relations between the WCC and its Orthodox member churches sparked lively debate. Orthodox member churches have charged the WCC with "Protestant domination" of its theological and social agenda, its decision-making style and its ecumenical worship.

Protestant member churches have generally embraced an increasingly informal worship style which combines liturgical elements from a variety of traditions.

The Orthodox — whose identity as churches is closely tied to their formal liturgical style and content — have become deeply troubled by what has come to be coined "ecumenical worship," so a proposal was put forward to do away with the term "worship" entirely at WCC gatherings.

Bishop Margot Kaessmann of the Evangelical Church in Germany, an influential central committee member who said she was drawn to the WCC 20 years ago by the worship services at its assembly in Vancouver, Canada, said: "I don't think what we have here is a forward-looking document." She called it "almost a document of fear."

"If in the WCC we can't celebrate ecumenical worship, I don't think I want to be involved any more," she said and resigned from the central committee. If it is not possible to bridge differences in worship, she said Protestant and Orthodox churches should consider having separate world organizations.

## No to majority rule

Another far-reaching proposal — to move the WCC from majority-rule to consensus decision-making — also prompted much debate. Many were afraid it would mire the organization in endless discussion without ever coming to a final decision. The report distinguishes several levels of consensus: unanimity; most are in agreement and the minority gives consent; various opinions are acknowledged and recorded; no agreement, thus postponement; and agreement that no decision can be reached.

On the last day of meetings, the central committee voted with little dissent to replace its parliamentary voting procedure with a consensus

model of decision-making, a measure supported by Orthodox churches. Another committee was also formed on which the Orthodox will have equal representation and which will, in effect, give them input on all WCC proposals on a privileged level.

## India and Pakistan: 'threat to world peace'

Along with internal matters, the WCC also directed attention to global events. It urged the governments of India and Pakistan to dismantle their nuclear arsenals and to stop developing more nuclear arms, warning that military confrontations in South Asia pose "a major threat to world peace." The central committee also appealed to other countries to end all material and political support to India and Pakistan for the production of nuclear weapons.

The central committee urged India and Pakistan to negotiate their differences according to the wishes of the people living in the disputed Kashmir region.

It also called on its member churches to mobilize international support for the repeal of Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Human rights activists have described these laws as arbitrary and contend that blasphemy cases are often built on personal jealousy.

## U.S.: desist from threats

Turning to the question of Iraq, it called on the United States to desist from military threats against Iraq and on Baghdad to respect United Nations Security Council resolutions, including demands that it destroy all weapons of mass destruction and that it co-operate fully with UN inspectors.

It expressed "alarm" about the persistent effort of the Government of the United States to gather international support for a new military action against Iraq with the stated objective of overthrowing the present government" in Baghdad.

At the same time, it reaffirmed its own earlier statements calling on the UN Security Council to lift immediately all sanctions that have direct and indiscriminate effects on the civilian population of Iraq.

## End the occupation

Addressing itself once again to the Palestine-Israel conflict, it renewed its call for an end to Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories and a halt to Palestinian suicide bombings. The statement calls for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Palestinian territories, for "all concerned parties" to ensure the safety of civilians, for the international



WCC WEBSITE PHOTO

WCC's Central Committee met in Geneva, Switzerland, from Aug. 26 to Sept. 3 of this year.

community to make a more concerted effort to mediate the conflict, and for governments — particularly the United States — to redirect economic aid from military to humanitarian purposes.

The WCC also sent a group of ten "accompaniers" to the region to support the efforts of peace activists and social service workers there. These "accompaniers" will travel with such people as ambulance drivers, medical and mental health workers, local bishops and religious leaders, Israeli peace activists and other social service workers to protect them from harm.

Turning its attention to Latin America, the WCC warned of a military escalation in Colombia's almost 40-year-old civil war and called on the United States to cease its military aid to the Colombian government, saying that the violence in Colombia posed a threat to the "entire Latin American continent."

## U.S.: withdraw from Colombia

It called on the U.S. "to withdraw all its military forces, including military and other related advisers, from Colombia and from its other installations in the Latin American region without delay," and it also demanded an end to a state of emergency imposed by newly elected President Alvaro Uribe. It urged the Colombian government "to rescind all emergency measures, to guarantee full respect of the human rights of its citizens and to respect fully those provisions of international rule of law applicable in times of civil conflict," especially the protection of civilian populations.

The committee also called on the armed rebel movement to desist from actions that endangered civilians and to seek a return to peace negotiations.

Uribe was swept to power in

May buoyed by a war-weary population frustrated by increasing violence and by the collapse of peace talks between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the main rebel movement.

According to the report, the root of the conflict lies in a long history of social injustice rather than in drug-trafficking or in the violence of the armed guerrilla movements. The Bush administration through recent anti-terrorism legislation is authorizing \$1.7 billion US in direct military assistance to the Uribe government to be used expressly for fighting leftist guerrillas.

## Western churches: confess racism and be reconciled

On a more general level, the central committee called for a review of past and present racism in member churches and outlined a process to redress injuries inflicted by discrimination. It urged the WCC's 342 member churches to examine their missionary pasts and consider how they have affected indigenous people, Africans and people of African descent, Dalits (formerly called "untouchables") and other ethnic minorities. The church body recommended that churches initiate a multi-step process of reconciliation, including acknowledging victims' experiences of racism, confessing complicity, apologizing and requesting forgiveness, pointing to the United Church of Canada as an example. The United Church formally apologized for past racist beliefs and wrongs committed against First Nations People in Canada and established a "healing fund" to support programs designed by and for Aboriginal communities.

Further recommendations and possible related programmes are expected to be presented at the WCC's ninth assembly scheduled for 2006 in Porto Alegre, Brazil.



## Church

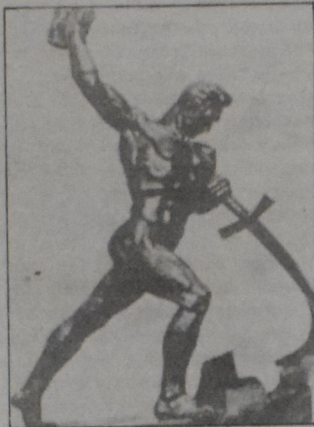
# 'A Prophetic Vision of the Last Days'

Pope John Paul II on Cantic in Isaiah 2

*In the last days  
the mountain of the LORD's temple  
will be established as chief  
among the mountains;  
it will be raised above the hills,  
and all nations will stream to it.  
Many peoples will come and say,  
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God of Jacob.  
He will teach us his ways,  
so that we may walk in his paths."  
The law will go out from Zion,  
the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.  
He will judge between the nations  
and will settle disputes for many peoples.  
They will beat their swords into plowshares  
and their spears into pruning hooks.  
Nation will not take up sword against nation,  
nor will they train for war anymore.  
Come, O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.*

VATICAN CITY (Zenit.org) — Next to the Psalter, true and proper book of prayer of Israel and later of the Church, there is another kind of "Psalter" disseminated in different historic, prophetic and wisdom books of the Bible. It is also made up of hymns, supplications, praises and invocations, often of great beauty and spiritual intensity scattered through the biblical pages. Here we will take into consideration one that is really admirable, the work of Isaiah, one of the greatest prophets of Israel, who lived in the eighth century B.C. He was the witness of difficult hours lived by the kingdom of Judah, but also a bard of messianic hope in very high poetic language.

This is the case of the Cantic placed almost at the beginning of his book, in the first verses of Chapter 2, preceded by a subsequent editorial note that reads like this: "This is what Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:1). The hymn is conceived, therefore, as a prophetic vision which describes an end toward which the history of Israel moves in hope. It is not accidental that the first words are: "In days to come" (verse 2), namely, in the fullness of time. Therefore, it is an invitation not to be fixed on the present, so miserable, but to know how to intuit in the



THE NATIONAL ATOMIC MUSEUM

*This bronze statue, reflecting the sword to plowshare theme, was sculpted by Evgeniy Vuchetich and donated by the then-Soviet Union to the United Nations in 1959.*

At the centre of the "vision" of Isaiah rises Mount Zion, which figuratively will rise above all the other mountains, being inhabited by God and, therefore, the place of contact with heaven (see 1 Kings 8:22-53). From this, according to Isaiah's saying in 60:1-6, a light will emanate that will rend and dissipate the darkness and toward it will move processions of people from every corner of the earth.

This power of attraction of Zion is based on two realities that derive from the holy mountain of Jerusalem: the Law and the Word of the Lord. In fact, these constitute only one reality, which is the source of life, light and peace, expressions of the mystery of the Lord and of his will. When the nations reach the summit of Zion, where the temple of God rises, then the miracle will take place which humanity has always awaited and toward which it sighs. The people let the weapons fall from their hands, which are then gathered to be forged into peaceful instruments of work: the swords are transformed into plowshares, and the spears into pruning

hooks. Thus arises a horizon of peace, of Shalom (see Isaiah 60:17), as is said in Hebrew, a word cherished especially by messianic theology. The curtain is finally lowered forever on war and hatred.

## Vision of messianic flavor

This "vision" of messianic flavor will be taken up subsequently in Chapter 60 of the same book in a more vast scene, sign of a further meditation on the essential and incisive words of the prophet, precisely those of the Cantic just proclaimed. The prophet Micah (see 4:1-3), will take up the same hymn, although with a different end (see 4:4-5) to that of Isaiah's saying (see Isaiah 2:5).

Isaiah's saying ends with an appeal, which is in the line of spirituality of the songs of pilgrimage to Jerusalem: "O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord" (Isaiah 2:5). Israel must not remain a spectator of this radical historic transformation; it cannot dissociate itself from the invitation that resounded at the beginning on the lips of the people: "Come, let us climb the Lord's mountain" (verse 3).

## Christians challenged by Isaiah's song

We, Christians, are also challenged by this Cantic of Isaiah. In commenting on it, the Fathers of the Church of the fourth and fifth century (Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, Theodoret of Cyrus, Cyril of Alexandria) saw it fulfilled in the coming of Christ. Consequently, they identified in the Church the "mountain of the temple of the Lord ... erected on the top of the mountains," from which the Word of the Lord issued and to which the pagan peoples flowed, in the new era of peace inaugurated by the Gospel.

The martyr St. Justin, in his "Prima Apologia," written about the year 153, already proclaimed the fulfilment of the verse of the Cantic that says: "from Jerusalem shall go forth the word of the Lord" (see verse 3). He wrote: "From Jerusalem men will go out to the world, 12 in number; and they were ignorant; they did not know how to speak, but thanks to the power of God they revealed to the whole of humanity that they were sent by Christ to teach the Word of God to all. And we, who before used to kill one another, now no longer fight against our enemies, but so as not to lie and to deceive those who questioned us, we willingly die confessing Christ" ("Prima Apologia," 39, 3: "Gli apologeti greci," Rome, 1986, p. 118).

Because of this, in a special way we Christians welcome the appeal of the prophet and seek to lay down the foundations of that civilization of love and peace in which there will no longer be war, "no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, [for] the old order has passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

[Translation by ZENIT. I selected this meditation as especially appropriate during this season of remembrance of 9-11. Editor]

## Foreign Anglicans join in protest against same-sex blessings

Ferdy Baglo

VANCOUVER (ENI) — Dissident Canadian Anglicans were joined by church leaders from abroad at a conference in early September protesting against the decision by the Canadian Anglican diocese of New Westminster to authorize same-sex blessings.

Four foreign bishops and archbishops joined Canadian priests and parishes at the meeting, which ended on September 3 and was called by opponents of the New Westminster decision.

### Provocative, inflammatory

The presence of the African, Asian and U.S. clerics at the conference hosted by the dissenting Anglican Communion in New Westminster (ACNW) was described as "provocative and inflammatory" by the sitting

bishop of the diocese, Michael Ingham.

In an open letter to diocesan leaders prior to the conference, Ingham said the foreign clerics were "deliberately rejecting church policy which forbids intervening in another bishop's diocese."

In June, the diocese of New Westminster became the first in the Anglican Communion to endorse the blessing of same-sex unions. Representatives of eight parishes and 12 clergy walked out of the synod meeting in protest.

Archbishop Yong Ping Chung of the Province of South East Asia, the most outspoken of the foreign church leaders at the Vancouver gathering last week, said: "Anglicans in Asia are very sad about what's happened in Vancouver."

"This kind of issue is life and death to us," the controversial

archbishop told reporters at a news conference.

### Chung broke church rules

Last year Chung broke church rules by unilaterally consecrating Anglican bishops in the United States as missionary bishops of the conservative Anglican Mission in America, without the permission of the U.S. diocesan bishop or the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States. At the time, Dr. George Carey, the archbishop of Canterbury and leader of the world-wide Anglican Communion, called the ordinations "at best irregular and at worst schismatic."

The other foreign church leaders attending the Vancouver conference were Archbishop Bernard Malango of the Anglican Province of Central Africa; Bishop Peter Njenga, of Mount Kenya South,

representing his primate, Archbishop David Gitari; and Bishop Andrew Fairfield from the U.S. state of North Dakota, representing the American Anglican Council, a conservative group.

### 'Flying bishop'

A key topic of discussion at the Vancouver meeting was the request for a "flying bishop" — formally called "alternative episcopal oversight" — to serve the dissenting Anglicans in the diocese.

Archbishop David Crawley, Anglican metropolitan of the Province of British Columbia and Yukon and Bishop Ingham's superior, said that the dissidents wanted to have "a bishop of their choice from outside."

This would mean, in effect, "a mini-diocese within the diocese — or setting up their own diocese,"

Crawley said.

He told ENI that the Anglican Church of Canada had no provision for the authorization of "someone coming from outside" to have "complete episcopal jurisdiction", and that he would not allow a competing diocese to be set up to serve only the conservative members of the church.

Crawley said the New Westminster synod had provided for the calling of an "episcopal visitor," a bishop from Canada, to come into the diocese regularly to provide pastoral care and episcopal supervision for the dissident parishes. The synod had also allowed for "freedom of conscience — or setting up their own diocese", parishes will not be forced or coerced in any way into blessing same-sex unions," he said.

See SAME-SEX page 16...



## Family/Agriculture

# Everyone benefits when parents get involved in school life



NEWS CANADA

## Lisa M. Petsche

The public library's summer reading club has ended, the outdoor community pool has been drained, and soccer and baseball uniforms have been packed away. This can mean only one thing: school is back in session.

Many articles are published at this time of year on how to help kids with homework, in terms of organization, concentration, and so on. A piece that caught my eye when I recently went online to search for some of them was titled, "Parents Have Homework, Too." Author Sybil Humphries, an elementary school teacher, discusses how parents' role in education is not only significant, but equally as important as that of the school.

## Our knee-jerk reaction

This perception prompts teachers and administrators to urge today's parents to become more involved in school life. The expectation comes at a time, though, when most of us work outside of home and keep a hectic pace. And so our knee-jerk reaction tends to be, "I don't have time."

Here's some food for thought, however: research has found a positive relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement. And according to the Hand in Hand program, additional benefits to children of a strong linkage between home and school include positive attitudes and behavior, better attendance, a higher graduation rate and a higher rate of enrolment in postsecondary education.

Parents also directly benefit, gaining confidence in their role and an increased understanding of the educational system. Teachers hold them in higher esteem, too.

So clearly it's worth rearranging priorities and personal and family

schedules in order to get significantly involved in school life.

Here are some ways to nurture the parent-teacher partnership.

- If your child has a teacher you're unfamiliar with, introduce yourself as soon as possible. If you'd like to inquire about things like classroom rules and homework policy — or perhaps curriculum — consider making an appointment.

- Read school and classroom newsletters. Post monthly calendars of events in a prominent place.

- Regularly ask your child about the school environment, to get his or her perspective. Use open-ended questions.

- Hang around for a few minutes before or after school, so you can chat with other parents; they're a great source of information and support. You can also informally connect with staff.

- Contact a teacher with any concerns promptly, before they escalate. Book a telephone meeting if a face-to-face one isn't feasible.

- Keep teachers informed of happenings outside of school — for example, a death in the family — that might influence your child's behavior in the classroom.

- Rearrange your schedule if necessary, in order to attend events such as open houses, plays and progress interviews. (One of our children has been identified with special needs, and staff were taken aback when, together my husband and I attended the initial planning conference. They told us it's increasingly difficult to get one parent, let alone both, to come to any kind of meeting or event at school.)

- Volunteer — in the classroom, the library or behind the scenes. If you're unable to assist on a regular basis, offer to help with a special event such as the meet-the-teacher barbecue or a fundraiser, or to chaperone a class trip. If you're

## What is help?

My wife, an emergency nurse, is taking as many double-pay overtime shifts as possible so that she can buy hay bales to help keep our sheep and cattle alive.

Hay is almost non-existent within 300 miles of here and grain crops will be greatly reduced from normal. Wilma would have to work steadily for six months doing nothing but overtime shifts in order to pay for the winter's hay needs. That will not be possible, but whatever help she can give is greatly appreciated.

Ironically, there would be very few overtime shifts available to nurses, had the healthcare system not been mismanaged, thus producing a severe shortage of nurses. The healthcare boondoggle was brought to us by the same people who have now established a \$325 million drought relief fund for all of the farmers of Alberta. Appreciation for what seems a generous handout is muted though, because, contrary to stated intent, it is not directed at the drought disaster. That there is virtually no hay primarily in the normally most productive central part of the province seems to have escaped notice by the powers that be.

All farmers in Alberta are getting a per-acre payment whether they experience drought or not. For instance, the farmer from which I bought hay lives 300 miles south on an irrigated farm. He also received above-normal rainfall this year. Yet, he gets the same per acre payment as me from the so-called drought disaster fund. This blanket payment policy has diluted needed help to the point that herd dispersal continues unabated while those keeping herds have sacrificed a year's wages to buy hay.

## How great is the need

When I took delivery of our first load of hay, the farmer said, "I wish I could help you". My impulse was to retort, "Then why don't you?" I thought better of it because generally farmers are eking out a living. The windfall from inflated feed prices will be short-lived and must be factored into long-term farming survival.

Yet there are generous and sacrificial gifts of hay and pasture from within and without Alberta, most notably Ontario. Though the hay may be free, transportation is costly. That, too, is being subsidized to a degree by government and corporations. However, the feed needs are so monumental that the feed received mainly warms the hearts of farmers. Very few win the hay lottery and the winners receive enough to feed three or four cows for the winter.

Just how big is the need and how can it be met?

It is not yet apparent but this may be a disaster of proportions impossible to measure. It therefore may be impossible to help to any significant extent.

unavailable during school hours, ask if there's a task you can assist with on your own time.

- Follow local and provincial education issues in the news.

- Join the school council. (Ours meets bimonthly for a couple of hours, which isn't a huge commitment.) Not only is it a means of having input into school life, it's a great way to get to know the principal and staff, meet like-minded parents, and keep current on what's

## COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE



In July a letter appeared in a city paper here with the opening line, "My family is going to a funeral — another one —". The writer went on to explain that the deceased were farmers who seemed to have lost all hope and took their own lives. I don't know the writer, but I do know her grandpa, father and uncle who she describes as slumped over from so many burdens. They had followed all the expert advice for staying viable including diversification and expansion but nothing prepared them for a year when virtually nothing grew.

## Reports tell the story

The following are excerpts from late August crop reports for Alberta as published in The Western Producer. Keep in mind Alberta's farming area reaches about 1,000 miles from north to south and 300 miles east to west.

South: Annual (grain) crops and hay fair to good. Pasture poor to good.

Central: Many annual crops abandoned to grazing. 70 per cent of crops poor.

Northeast: Crops well below normal. Hay and pasture poor.

Northwest: Annual crops half of average; many harvested for forage.

Peace (North): Annual crops used for livestock feed. Pasture and hay fair to poor.

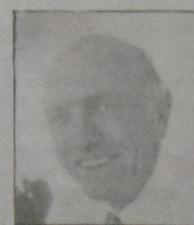
Feed exchange e-mail sites yield heart-rending pleas for feed to save a few animals. Owners of large feedlots too are reduced to begging for feed.

An agricultural catastrophe of these dimensions has not occurred here in living memory. It is the driest it has been here for 130 years. This is not an isolated dry year. It is the culmination of a series of increasingly dry years.

Thinking about the gravity of the situation, my thoughts turn to those who help. My wife's efforts are much appreciated but the great treasure is that she is in my life. More precious than the hay being donated from the east is the reassurance of the goodwill out there. The institutional help we receive or are promised unfortunately is not yet significant in the face of the disaster of lost crops, livestock and lives.

Finally, all good comes from God and even in despairing circumstances, "My help comes from the Lord, maker of heaven and earth" (Psalm 121). This is his world. We are his children.

Vern Gleddie has a sheep ranch near Edmonton, Alta



happening within the school, at the board level and system-wide.

A word of caution: research shows that parental involvement decreases once children reach middle school (grades 5-8). However, involvement in our kids' lives is just as important during those pre-teen years, experts say, so don't pull back, even though your child may want you to.

To quote a videotape titled Caught in the Middle (see the

transcript and other resources for parents of middle school students at [www.caughtinthemiddle.org](http://www.caughtinthemiddle.org)): "For parents, knowledge is power: knowledge about their child's teachers, friends and the general school environment. To get that knowledge, get involved at school." You won't regret it.

Lisa M. Petsche is a mother of three, social worker and freelance writer.



Psychology

# Marriage is more than having sex two or three times a week

According to Mosaic law, the land and vineyards were to lie fallow every seventh year "as a Sabbath to the Lord." The belief was that fields could be grazed for only so long without losing nutrients. They needed replenishing. The Hebrews call the respite a "sabbatical year." Cheryl Jarvis

"I'm convinced a lot of people divorce when all they needed was a meaningful break." C. Gray

They met at a Christian college. He planned to be a farmer, she wanted to be an English teacher. They married shortly after graduation and moved to the Prairies. They farmed, and raised three children. She did substitute teaching for many years. She was at home on the tractor and in the classroom.

## She became restless

At age 38 she became restless. Her children were growing up and involved in many activities. She yearned for challenges and struggles of her own. Yet she stayed loyal to the details of family life. She was a frequent visitor to the local library, as she read and reread the literary classics. But her heart remained empty and forlorn.

One day the mail brought information one of her children had requested from a Christian college. Her heart soared as she read the courses the college was offering. Finally, she knew what she needed to do.

She enrolled herself in an intensive three-week course at a college hundreds of kilometres away. She came home after that time excited and ready to tackle the reading and writing requirements. She worked hard at focusing her life around family matters and her new academic challenges. She was busy, but her heart was full of joy! She found her oasis and went back every semester for five years.

## Retreat from expectations and entanglements

Sabbaticals in the corporate or professional world are commonplace. Our pastor had a six-month sabbatical a while ago. A friend as well as a relative is presently enjoying a well-deserved rest from the rigors of work. Yet, we never speak of sabbaticals in marriage. Why not? They have been taking place under various guises for centuries.

In the Middle Ages, wealthy married women who wanted time alone retreated to convents. In Victorian times, treatments for various



KAREN LAUB-NOVAK

illnesses included sea voyages, a long journey, a move from town to country, as well as admissions to sanatoriums or other retreats. Anything to calm, stimulate or invigorate the nervous system.

Others were more straightforward. Henry David Thoreau retreated to Walden Pond after his beloved older brother died. His experience shaped his belief that *everyone* at some point in life needed to retreat from the entanglements and expectations of others. It was the only way that one could discover or recover oneself.

Sue Bender, a more contemporary figure, went to live among the Amish as she "looked to fill an empty space" inside herself.

## Revolution in marital expectations

Cheryl Jarvis in *The Marriage Sabbatical* believes we need to examine marital sabbaticals due to our longer life expectancy and its corollary, a longer marriage expectancy in which we have fewer children. Furthermore, God created us as developing people and what worked for us at age 25 will not fit at midlife or older. Consequently, we need to realign our lives at age 40, 50 or 60 in which *marriage for life* becomes an increasing challenge.

Also, with the rise in gender equality has come another culture shift: a revolution in marital expectations. How many of us enter

marriage expecting our spouse to be our lover, best friend, parenting partner, recreational companion, and spiritual soul mate? We place a lot of psychic weight on one relationship — given that nearly half of all couples divorce — more weight than it apparently can bear!

Marital sabbaticals can short-circuit unhelpful behaviors and communication patterns between spouses and allow reflective breaks to help them understand what is going on beneath the surface. The length of the sabbaticals can vary from a few weeks to a few years or it can be broken up over a period of time depending on the unique need of the spouses involved.

## A meaningful break can save marriages

The difference between sabbaticals and marital separations is one of *intention*. A sabbatical is a move towards replenishing oneself. A separation is a flight from the other. A sabbatical is planned and says, "I care about you." A separation is often reactive and says, "Maybe I

## Getting Unstuck

Arlene Van Hove

don't care about you." A sabbatical has a return date, stating, "I will be back." A separation is cruelly open-ended and says, "Maybe I won't be back."

Catherine Gray, a marriage counsellor, believes a sabbatical implies growth. A separation implies rupture. In a sabbatical, the partners can grow without jeopardizing the relationship and, in fact, can enrich it. Separation frequently leads to divorce, which a year later former spouses often regret. At the same time, so much animosity has occurred they cannot go back. A meaningful break could have saved their marriage. And no — sabbaticals are definitely not about sex!



Arlene Van Hove is a psychotherapist with Cascade Christian Counselling Association in Surrey, B.C.

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## Reflection

# Hide-and-seek in the thunderstorm

Ron DeBoer

I'm sure not everyone would agree with me, but there's something exhilarating about a loud, windy, flash-bulb thunderstorm out in the country. A stiff breeze turns the leaves inside out, then bluish-black storm clouds begin moving toward you, followed by distant rumbles and an occasional flash across the fields. Big fat raindrops announce themselves on the roof and windows as the thunder draws closer, and finally the skies open up, thunder booms every couple of seconds and lightning rips the darkened sky in jagged cracks.

*I've often thought of thunderstorms as the voice of nature, maybe even God, calling out, reminding all of us of his presence.*

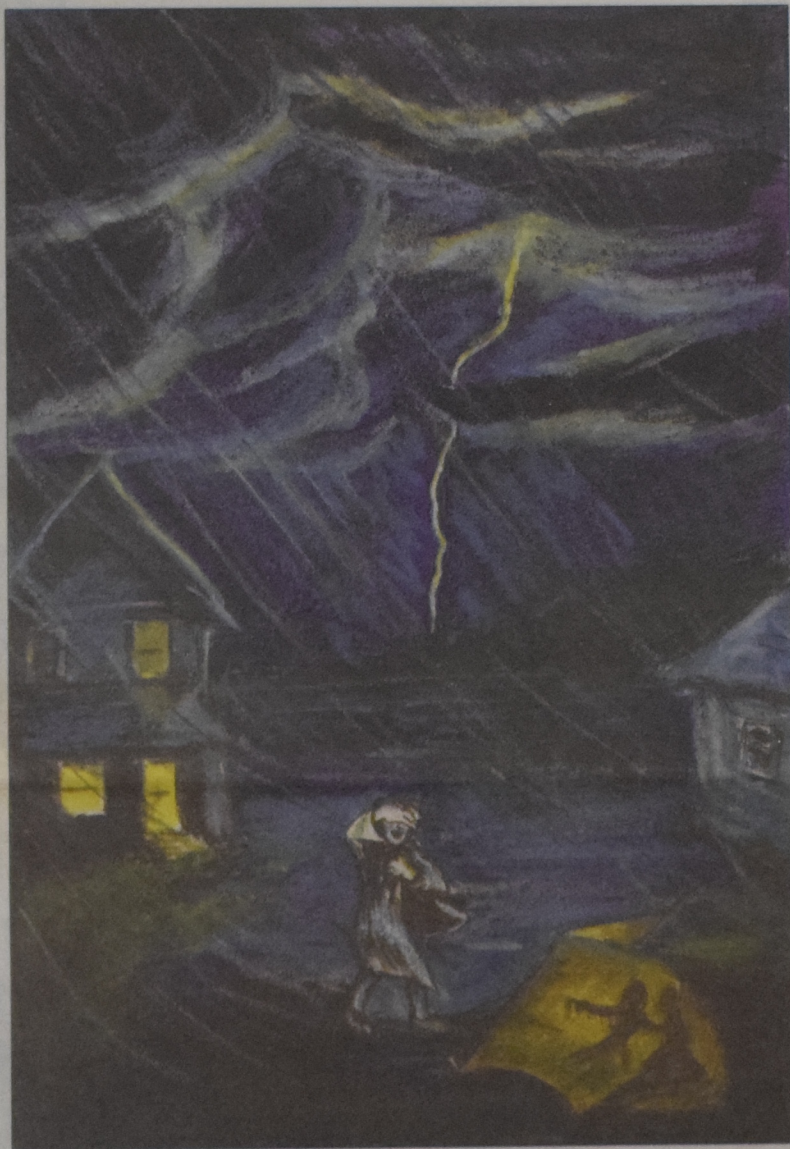
When I was a kid growing up on a dairy farm in Grey County, thunderstorms would sneak up on us like a thief in the night, and my parents would rustle my brothers and me out of bed and sit us at the kitchen table, while the sky grumbled and hurled its lightning bolts toward us. Many a farmhouse had been struck by lightning in those days, and my parents wanted to be able to hustle us out quickly should lightning find our roof. Being awakened in the dead of night and joking with my older brothers — who usually wouldn't give the time of day to us "little ones" — was always a great adventure.

## Different characters during war scenes

I remember clearly the night the brother who punched me at least once a day, propped me in his lap until the storm rolled away. We were different characters during these war scenes, and I was always disappointed when the rumbling faded and we were given our marching orders back upstairs. The next morning the sun would be shining, the older brother would punch me on his way to the bathroom, and the big farm kitchen would seem altogether ordinary, not at all the front line trench of the night before.

This summer, I experienced two good old-fashioned thunderstorms in two different farmhouses where we were staying. One was at my brother's house near Chatham. My brothers, our wives and all the grandkids were staying in the two-storey, century-old house or camping in tents in the yard in celebration of our parents' 45th anniversary, when the high winds started and the dark clouds which had been hovering menacingly over us all evening opened up. We crowded onto the porch and watched the light show until the lightning was mere flashbulbs on the edges of the fields.

Later that night, the storm returned. Thunder boomed and lightning snaked across the sky. Always the heavy sleeper, I dreamed a ghost was standing at the open window of the bedroom where we were sleeping, staring eerily across the corn fields as her long white hair and the window's curtains blew into the room. Then something



HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN ILLUSTRATION

seized my leg. I sat bolt upright. The transparent woman standing at the window was no dream — she was Karen, listening for the voices of the eleven- and eight-year-old sleeping in the tent below our window.

## The ghost turned slowly

I've been married long enough to know what that grip on my ankle meant. The ghost turned slowly toward me and beckoned to the door, and I stumbled obediently down the long rickety stairs to the back door which flew open in the wind when I stepped outside. I tip-toed barefoot through the wet grass, and only then became aware I was conducting this rescue mission in the middle of a flash thunderstorm in nothing but my underwear.

The yard-light swinging dangerously on the hydro pole cast the ethereal shadow of my lanky frame onto the side of the house. I looked like the villain in some chainsaw thriller movie. I zipped open the tent and there were the kids, huddled against each

other. They nearly leaped into my arms when I poked my head under the flap.

When I got back to the room, settled the kids in their damp sleeping bags on the floor, and dried myself off, I noticed the ghost was gone, asleep peacefully in her own sleeping bag. The next morning, she said, "Storm? What storm?"

## Nova Scotia's worst

The other thunderstorm was one of Nova Scotia's worst in recent memory — according to the Bridgewater radio station we listened to during our stay there. In early August, a storm rolled in off the Atlantic Ocean and knocked the hydro out for 20,000 residents of that province. Thankfully, I was there to enjoy it!

We had rented a big farmhouse two minutes from the shores of the Atlantic. Two stories, secret nooks, stairways, and trap doors — this house had it all. We had watched the clouds roll in since suppertime, and just as darkness cloaked us, the thunder and

lightning descended on us like war planes. We grabbed a flashlight and brought out a couple of stubby candles, and then we did something completely irrational — we played hide-and-go-seek!

I was "it" first, and I have to admit, shivers were working their cold little fingers up and down my spine as I looked in closets and under beds for the rest of the family. Every time I found someone behind a door or lying in the bathtub, my heart did a little leap and pirouette. Thunder continued to crack and lightning lifted the dark then dropped it on us again for what seemed like eternity.

## A horror movie scenario

When it was my turn to hide, I found a dark little closet at the top of the stairs and buried myself in old pillows and waited. And waited. Thunder boomed. I waited. Lightning flashed. I waited. I couldn't hear anything going on in the house and I, the victim of a fertile imagination, began formulating one of those horror movie scenarios. *Someone is in the house....*

Then I heard all five of them creeping up the stairs, whispering conspiratorially. I heard the doorknob on the closet turn. I saw the closet door edge open. Five faces peered tentatively into the pile of pillows — at which point I jumped up and let out a blood-curdling scream that nearly knocked the two older ones back down the stairs, sent the two younger ones into hysterical sobs and earned me an hour of silence from my beloved.

Long after the storm had left and our hydro had returned, she repeated, "That wasn't necessary at all, and you know it." The younger two still squint their eyes at me, but the 13-year-old, gave what is as close to approval as she's capable of right now — "good one, Dad!" — followed by a roll of her eyes.

I've often thought of thunderstorms as the voice of nature, maybe even God, calling out, reminding all of us of his presence. I think it goes back to a bookmark I once got for learning my memory work back in fifth grade. On it were the words to that great hymn, "How Great Thou Art," which were printed on dark storm clouds billowing over an angry sea. I can't sing a verse of that song without thinking of a thunderstorm, and when thunder clouds roll over my house today, the tune to that hymn always finds my lips.

One evening when I was a kid, my parents received a phone call, after which they loaded us into our car and drove us several miles to a farmhouse which smouldered in the evening breeze. Up and down the road in front of the house carloads of fellow church members stared in disbelief at the blackened shell of a big brick farmhouse, which belonged to someone in the church. Rumors had been circulating that a black cloud had mysteriously appeared in the sky and a bolt of lightning had licked out of that cloud like a snake's tongue and burnt the house to the ground. I'm not kidding.

General consensus held that so-and-so was being punished for something or other and was receiving his just desserts. God was

*Continued on page 13...*



## Reflection

## Sunshine, yellow and religion

... continued from page 12

angry, and he was showing it by way of a single cloud that had no business being in the sky that afternoon. I remember being scared and saying my prayers earnestly every night after that. I didn't want God coming after me!

I don't believe in a God like that today, but why does this Old Testament view of God still exist?

The Greeks believed the gods were angry when tornadoes swirled through Greece or hailstones flattened their crops. The gods were pleased when they sent regular rain and sunshine. But listen to the language afforded to extreme weather today and you'll hear "Act of God" often. When trailer parks are ripped apart or German towns swept away by flash floods, God's wrath isn't too far off the minds of those affected.

Perhaps the Old Testament story of Jonah being flushed out by God via a storm remains strong in our minds. When Jonah was thrown overboard — delivered to God by the terror-stricken sailors from whom Jonah was hitching a ride — the storm subsided immediately. And the voice of God literally came out of a storm when he spoke to Job after Job's complaints about his situation. God approaches him from within a storm and sets Job straight on who is the King of the universe.

### He stilled the storm to a whisper

I like what Psalm 107 has to say about storms. When sailors — "merchants on the mighty waters" (v. 23) — are afraid of a storm, you know it's a serious storm. They "reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their wits end." But the psalmist says, "He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed" (v. 29). Only the Lord can accomplish whispers and hushes out of a raging storm.

### My favorite storm story

My favorite storm story in the Bible is found in Luke. Jesus tells the disciples to sail across a lake, after which he falls asleep. A storm rages and tosses the boat as if it's made out of birch bark. Jesus sleeps through the whole thing, and when the disciples, terrified, wake him, "He rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm." Then Jesus turned and rebuked his disciples. "Where is your faith?" he asks them.

It's comforting to know that in life's storms — be they thunder and lightning — or those metaphorical storms that sneak up on us every day — illness, pain, financial or spiritual crisis — we can call on Jesus and he will calm the storm. He's in our boats, farmhouses, and relationships. He wants us to have faith that he is in control and that he stills the storms to whispers and hushes.



*Pollarded Willows with Setting Sun (1888), oil on canvas by Vincent Van Gogh.*

### Peter Karner

Today I am yellow. Yellow as sunlight, as gold, as the moon and the stars. Yellow as the yolk of an egg, as a canary, as a lion. Yellow as a wasp, as a sandstorm, as pus and urine.

Today I am yellow. I have yellow cheeks, yellow eyes and a yellow skin. My teeth and fingernails are yellow. My knees have turned yellow these days. My vision is yellow. My soul burns like the sun. Yellow the crops, the labor, the light. Yellow jealousy, anger, sickness and death.

Yellow shallowness, busyness, the flight into folly. All that has turned yellow recognizes no limits, wants to cry out, mocks every calculation.

### Yellow histories

There are many yellow histories: from that of the sunflower which mistook itself for the sun to the stench of brimstone in hell.

Yellow histories reveal the scandal of humanity. All those we've turned into scapegoats carry a yellow sign: the wife of the hangman, the prostitutes, the Jews, the Protestants and other heretics.

Without yellow, no religion. Without yellow, no Christianity. All religions turn the yellow sun into a god. Christ too wears a radiant halo. He is "The light of the world." The Psalms praise God, who has clothed himself with the sun.

The sun is the religious symbol for rulers and for revolutionaries. The sun is the religious symbol for the opponents of atomic power and its "innocent" practitioners.

Jesus owes his sermon on the mount to the sun, for the sun does not distinguish between people, shining alike on good and bad. For out of the sins of humanity the sun makes

ozone and may well suffocate us with it. Yellow has many nuances: bright yellow, lemon yellow, yellow as the greed of the affluent. Who names people? One can identify them by their color.

Today I became yellow because I experience this color like my Reformed brother Van Gogh. I feel the heat, the sunflowers, the grain, the light. Or is it a yellow passion of the soul, a madness?

Today I am yellow: I walk across yellow meadows, through yellow woods. I climb the tall yellow tower and try to capture

the sun. But I cannot because I don't have a yellow net.

The rays of the sun taunt me, but I don't understand their yellow words. I feel yellow.

*Reprinted in translation from Reformiertes Kirchenblatt, July/Aug. 2002 issue.*



*The Yellow Books (Parisian Novels) (1887), Oil on canvas by Vincent Van Gogh.*



## Christian Living

# Why go to church? (5)

## To accomplish the work of praise

A.A. van Ruler

This answer brings us to the heart of the matter. The previous answer – “To experience existence to the full” – still approached the question from outside. But praise is the full experience of existence. When we enter into the work of praise, we have fully stepped out and across into the presence of the Creator.

With this answer we penetrate to the heart of the worship service and we first begin to locate our most basic motives for going to church in terms of the content and essence of the church service. At its core, the worship service is the work of praise. We might describe the worship service in a great number of other ways as well, for it has many facets. But when we speak of the work of praise, we sense that we are standing at the very centre.

venerate is something quite different from to obey, although they do not exclude but include one another.

### To honor and glorify

There is also the word “to honor” as well as “to glorify.” Behind these is the Hebrew word “chabod,” the radiant light and the inner magnitude of God. Hence, to glorify God can be described as “to confess God’s all-surpassing greatness in word and deed.” The glory of God pervades the whole of our worship services and fills it from beginning to end. We go to church to stand in this light, to feel this greatness, to declare this inexpressible glory.

What of “to contemplate” or “to adore”? That depends on what we mean by those words. They can be used in objectionable ways. Contemplation is often associated with silence and stillness. Sometimes it suggests an element of mute, powerless, and servile subjection to a blind power. At any rate, we must be careful about calling for more contemplation in our worship. To my way of thinking, it isn’t very Israelitic. In our worship services, we should stand before God man-to-man as it were. That’s what’s attractive about the term “to praise”: praising, blessing, and glorifying contain an element of human judgment.

Man’s position before God is that strong. He is the judge of everything – even of God. He judges him worthy of honor. He praises him. But he does not prostrate himself on the ground in pure adoration. He stands erect like a man. He declares his praise.

What brings a person – when he becomes fully human – to offer praise? First, the fact that there is something and not nothing. We are here and so is the whole world. When you pause and reflect on this, the groundlessness of this simple fact makes you dizzy. But being isn’t all there is. When we think of being, then the question about the ground of being also crops up. And the ground of being is even more groundless and dizzying than being.

We sense this fully only when we have been injected with the faith of Israel. Then we no longer speak of the ground of being as the unity or energy of being but as our Creator.

And our Creator is radically distinguished from his creation. He freely called it into being, not out of his own essence, not out of something else, but out of nothing.



SKOLD PHOTOGRAPH

### *Praise is the highpoint of humanity, of being human. The liturgy is the soul of culture.*

It is a pleasure to be able to add that this answer also brings us to the heart of all culture and humanity. Praise is the highpoint of humanity, of being human. The liturgy is the soul of culture.

### Showering God with bouquets of ‘good’ words

We might also have used the word “bless” instead of “praise,” for that is another thing we do in church – bless. Not just the people in the name of God, but as people we may, in turn, also bless God. This way of speaking has almost disappeared, and the notion behind it strikes us as strange. But in the biblical world it is not at all strange to think of showering God with bouquets of “good” words.

The word “serve” would also have served. We go to church to serve God. It’s a remarkable word. We can understand it as: “obeying God in the practical dealings of our daily lives with people and things.” Although this is an important meaning of the word, when used of the worship service, it picks up a couple of additional meanings. One is to come reverently and decorously before God to bow before him. Such a gracious gesture captures the essence of the worship service and of religion. The liturgical, after all, goes way beyond the ethical and the moral. It is something altogether different. To

Although he is wholly from himself, in himself and out of himself, he is not turned away from but toward his creation. And for all these reasons, we cannot comprehend him – not in an image, not in a concept, not in an idea. Actually, we cannot even grasp him in our thinking; we can only praise and adore him. The church has summed this up by speaking of the ground of being not only as our Creator but also as the Trinity. As the Trinity, he is complete in himself; he is love.

Only in this Hebrew-Christian environment did man come to real praise. No other religion came to genuine praise of God.

### There-ness is beginning of praise

But what does the Christian church praise in its worship? The freedom out of which God called the world into being? God’s power? God’s holiness? God’s goodness? Yes, for all these things. Yet, these are mere child’s play when compared to the essential thing: praise for the being of being as such, namely, that God, the ground of being, IS. The there-ness of things is even more fundamental than how they are or that they are this or that. It is this there-ness that is the beginning of praise.

But let’s make things less abstract. Let’s begin again by saying the same thing in more human terms. Let’s begin by asking, How do we as people react to being and to the ground of being?

The simplest answer is with *gratitude*. Although it may sometimes not seem so, when it comes

right down to it, we are grateful for being alive. We cling to it with every fibre of our being. Who really looks forward to death? Most of us experience life as a gift – as a wonderful, strange and unfathomable gift. Life is sweet. Not something in it, but life itself, the very fact that we are, no matter what the circumstance.

### Enjoying God

And beyond gratitude, there is *joy*. We take delight in things. In the final analysis, we are even happy about ourselves. Similarly, we can also be happy about God. We can delight in him – that he is there and that he is God. This brings us to the heart of joy, namely, *to enjoy*. To live life to the full is to enjoy it. That can also be said about God: “To praise God is really the same thing as to enjoy him. And to enjoy him is really the same as to praise him.”

I am convinced that Christianity has erred in clinging to the position that we may only *enjoy* God and *use* the world. How can we have God without his world? How can we enjoy God without enjoying his world as well? Genuinely, fully enjoying the things of this world is an essential part a godly existence. The ultimate meaning of everything is this: an existence that delights in its own being.

Yet, all these words – gratitude and thankfulness, joy and delight – are not adequate to express what needs to be expressed. We’ll also have to reach for words like *perplexity* and *horror*. We will be overcome by these, too, when we pause even for a moment to reflect

on being, both our own and that of the world, and of the ground of both – God. It can even fill us with *dread*.

Of course we are also filled with a deep perplexity at all the suffering that happens in the world in a thousand terrible forms. But if all we do is recoil in horror, we still haven’t lived life to the depths. When Dorothee Soelle said that after Auschwitz she no longer knows how to speak of praising God, that was superficial. The Psalmist speaks differently. God is in being. He is in all things. He is also in the horror and the suffering. And everything depends on being able to discover praise there, too – to bring forth praise out of the depths and the stillness.

### We realize our smallness

Depth and stillness are fitting not just in the face of suffering, but across the board. Here such words as *humility* and *modesty* come into play. We realize our smallness, that we are not even able to live up to the greatness of our own being. We need to come to the point of *surrender*. In fact, something in us needs to be broken. Our lives need to be molded according to the decrees of God. All this, too, is part and parcel of praise.

But we may also think of the flipside of perplexity and horror, that is, of the “exaltation, the silent ecstasy that makes our feet like those of the deer.” There is a certain *intoxication* in existence, or at least in believing existence, that sometimes borders on folly but which is all the more valuable for that.



# Christian Living/Family

All these and many more reactions of the human heart are contained in the word "praise." But they must not remain inward. They must not only be felt, experienced and undergone; they must also be spoken, uttered, brought to expression. They must even be done, completely externalized.

## Concrete and fixed form

This brings us back to the worship service. Here this boundless praise by and for existence and for its ground receives concrete and fixed form. Gratitude becomes thanksgiving. Praise comes to expression in words, words spoken in public. It becomes a doing: you go to church, you stand up to sing. These are bodily acts — acts of praise.

Praise also involves our inwardness, of course: the soul is filled with a melody. And it is also deeply personal: you may praise your Creator in solitude, in inward delight, or in the tune you whistle or in the song you hum to yourself.

But the true form of praise comes in going to church, in the worship service. There it turns wholly into act. There it also becomes communal: the entire people of God liturgizes. In this way it also becomes public, for the church service happens in the public square, and, in a manner of speaking, in the state, or at any rate, in such a manner that the state must make room for it in its legislation. It also occurs at set times. And so praise is genuinely human work.

Praise is the meaning, the essence of existence. It engages my whole being. The work of praise is accomplished in the church's worship service. This is another reason I go to church: to put the finishing touches on my existence, which in its deepest being is praise.

As in all work, here, too, there is a schedule, a work-order. In the church service, praise is given not just a concrete form but also a fixed form. You no longer do it by the seat of your pants.

How does this work itself out in church? The entire worship service is, of course, praise from beginning to end. It's in the sermon, the sacraments, the prayers, the offerings and in the confession of sin and of faith. But one part of the worship service needs to be singled out — singing. We go to church to sing, to praise our Creator in song. It is not just a change of pace or to focus our attention. It is an essential part of the liturgy.

Reflecting on what happens when the church sings turns up one amazing observation after another.

We sing communally. Although we are no choir but ordinary folk,

with good and bad, trained and untrained voices, we sing together.

We sing even when we are not in the mood. When the songs are announced, the entire congregation chimes in. Eager or not, we usually sing along, often in spite of mood we're in and right through it.

The very elderly, for whom life has become difficult and burdensome and who no longer sing elsewhere, join in too. I was personally very moved when I sat beside my elderly father in church and heard him sing.

We sing not just for its own sake or for the sake of culture; we sing to praise God. To sing in church is to sing for God, and that's why it echoes in eternity. We sing together with ten thousand times ten thousand angels. The entire universe becomes a universe of song. History, too, becomes, in the words of Augustine, a beautiful song.

## Words have a very different meaning

When we sing, words have a very different meaning from what they have in discussions and in theological arguments; they are concrete images and therefore beyond debate. Singing is more than thinking or speaking. In our singing, we are, in a sense, momentarily free of thought. So Augustine says, Let's not speak, let's not be silent, let's jubilate! Singing rises above speaking and silence.

We might call singing the super-ego of culture, to borrow a term from Freud. The liturgy rises above all culture, but we might also say that historically culture arises out of liturgy, out of religion (cultus). Singing and playing before the face of God is the origin of all human play in the world (See Bonhoeffer, *Letters from Prison*, Letter of Jan. 23, '44).

We experience all these amazing things simply by going to church and joining with the congregation to sing. Nothing can be simpler or more ordinary. Yet, at the same time, it embraces all the mysteries of heaven and earth.

Although the liturgy comes to its own in singing, the element of praise pervades every element of the worship service, as I have said. Take the reading of the law, or the Ten Words. The latter is not just the source of our knowledge of our sinfulness. Nor is it just the rule for our gratitude. For the Huguenots, who introduced it into the liturgy, it was a form of thanksgiving and praise to God for giving us a knowledge of the good, of that which makes life beautiful. The holiness of life is the beauty of life. Good works are beautiful works. Let us cry out in jubilation, for we

# The farmer takes a wife

As a young man Jack, always dreamed of owning a farm. He and his father would go out together every spring to look at places for sale all over Ontario. In the fall of 1977 they purchased this one. When we married I realized farming would be our livelihood, but I didn't fully grasp what that meant. These days we each have our responsibilities. It works best that way. Jack doesn't issue cheques and I don't use sharp objects of any kind. Still, I like to think that over the years I have progressed as a farmer.

## Lean, mean, bale-throwing machine

Certain jobs come under the heading of "Character Builders." Unloading straw is such a task. Jack and the girls build the mow. James and I are assigned to the wagon. I keep busy trying not to fall off the top of the load and pulling my legs out from between the bales. Meanwhile James, the lean, mean, bale-throwing machine steadily piles bales onto the elevator and attempts to stay out of my path. It's a pretty good system. When only a few bales remain on the wagon, I set up lawn chairs at the back of the house and bring out a tray of drinks and cookies.

I know Jack relies on me to help him in all the tough jobs. Today was a prime example. Monday isn't exactly Jack's favorite day. He usually drinks an extra cup of coffee before going out the door on Mondays, but this morning there was no time for additional caffeine. A truckload of ready-mix cement was on its way. The weather forecast mentioned a 40 per cent chance of showers late in the afternoon. However, the cement had been ordered already on Friday, when the five-day forecast promised sunny skies for today.

## Tons of fun for all

Although our girls weren't here for the big event, James stayed home from work to help. Jack assured me there would be tons of fun for all three of us. While father and son raked out the oozing grey matter, I was told to direct the chute within the form. I don't know a lot about cement, but loitering near the back end of a truck in reverse gear always makes me a little nervous.

Things went fairly well until the driver adjusted the chute upward. I assumed he wanted me to let go. Who knew that thing would swing toward Jack and nearly knock him face first into the pool of wet cement? Fortunately he caught sight of the

are knights of the Kingdom, and in the law we hear the code of our quest.

We developed the theme of praise out of the theme of joy. The latter contains an element of interchange, of over-and-back. Not just because as part of the congregation we rejoice in and with one another. That is true. We support and boost one another to the heights of joy. We jubilate.

But this is child's play compared to my real meaning. Yes, man rejoices in God and all his works. But on the other hand we must also say — incredibly — that God, too, rejoices. About what? About himself and all his works,

of course.

But what comes first: the joy of man or the joy of God? To this question we can only reply that it is God who is the beginning of joy and that man is infected by it. But wouldn't it be better not to answer this question about firstness at all, and to say that it is a genuine interchange, a back-and-forth, a mutual infection between our joy and God's joy?

In any case, God does not just rejoice in himself and in his works but he also rejoices in man. He rejoices in what man does and especially in his joy. We can take this further and say that we rejoice in the joy God takes in man and all his

# Intangible Things

Heidi VanDerSlikke

monster at the last second and successfully dodged the impending disaster. Reactions varied, Jack's face registered surprised relief. James tried not to laugh out loud. I'm quite sure the driver was wondering who brought the blonde.

After that Jack promoted me to a new job. I was to trowel the first form while he and James raked out more cement into the next one. I approached my task with all the skill and enthusiasm of a five-year-old in a sandbox. James took a few minutes to explain that troweling is something like icing a gigantic cake and he showed me how to properly angle the trowel so as not to create big ruts. On my own I learned that cement is really, really heavy. Also, a person should never try to move her feet too swiftly, lest she leave her rubber boots behind.

## The sky grew ominously dark

Meanwhile the sky grew ominously dark. As I stood to admire the relatively smooth surface of my project, hundreds, then thousands of little pockmarks appeared. It was pouring rain. Jack seemed truly excited about this development. He scrambled to cover all three of the newly cemented forms, only to discover that we were out of plastic. I quickly hosed off my boots and jumped, soaking wet, into the pickup truck. With no regard whatsoever for the fact that my handbag didn't match my rubber boots, I stormed into the hardware store and scooped up two rolls of clear plastic.

After the cement was safely covered, we cleaned up and changed into dry clothes. Jack invited us to the truck stop for a late breakfast. On the way there he mentioned being so cold he felt as if he were still sitting on a wet seat.

Glancing across at the driver's seat, I remembered being drenched when I went to town for the plastic.

Well, at least I made sure the waitress brought him an extra cup of coffee. It was Monday after all.



Heidi VanDerSlikke lives in  
Harriston, Ont.

doings and his joys.

Doesn't that fill you with an inner delight — to think that the Eternal takes pleasure in your pleasure? The outcome of this joy is that man rejoices not just in God and his works but also in himself and his own existence.

This is the state of full liberation: we may describe it as that existence that delights in itself before the face of the Eternal, in other words, with an eternal joy. Further than this we cannot go, for here we image the joy of God.

[Note: This is only the first part of this answer. The second part moves from praise of our Creator to praise of our Redeemer.]



## News

# Earth summit spells out global measures for sustainable development

Harry der Nederlanden

JOHANNESBURG — Some 100 world leaders, an additional 5,000 other governmental delegates, about 15,000 representatives from public interest groups and 2,000 journalists settled in the ritziest area of Johannesburg, South Africa, for 10 days in early September to set goals to help the poorest people on the planet and to do so without further harming the environment. The slogan for the so-called Earth Summit was "sustainable development."

## Keeping the people and environment together

There have been previous global meetings in which all the stress was on saving the planet, sometimes with little regard for how a rigorous, one-sided environmentalism will impact the ability of people to make a living, especially in the developing world. On the other hand, there have been many more meetings at which the entire focus was on how to keep fueling the global economic engine of growth and trade. The goal of this summit was to keep the two — people and environment — together.

What issued from the 10 days of intensive meetings was some 70 pages of plans for a better future. For some, a disappointing torrent of words; for others, a hopeful framework on which to build. Should we moan because so many millions were spent to give bureaucrats more paperwork? Or should we cheer because leaders from around the world have at least agreed on some necessary steps toward closing the gap between North and South and setting some broad targets to limit pollution?

The plan sets 2015 as the deadline for providing access to clean water and sanitation for the world's poorest, and 2010 as the target date by which the problem of biodiversity, that is, the loss of plant and animal species, will be addressed.

## A 'soft' agreement

A "soft" agreement was reached on a gradual reduction in the use of fossil fuels and the development of alternative sources of energy. Fossil fuels are considered to be the primary source of the pollutants that create global warming. The U.S. and oil-producing countries



AP PHOTO

President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, which hosted the latest Earth Summit.

opposed the adoption of any "hard" targets and timelines in this area, earning the wrath of many NGOs.

Pressure from the U.S. did result in the inclusion of a "good governance" clause calling for a respect for law and property rights, a clause obviously aimed at countries like Zimbabwe.

## Problems can't be tackled by government alone

What also emerged from the summit was an emphasis that these problems cannot be tackled by government alone but that there will have to be co-operation with non-governmental agencies (NGOs) and the private sector to meet broad objectives. Many activists, of course, considered this to be nothing more than an easy cop-out. How such co-operative ventures will be monitored has not yet been worked out, but there are plans to do so.

*Capital Commentary*, a publication of the Center for Public Justice, points out that because the plans adopted by the summit carry no legally binding authority, "the key in sustainable development is good government." It points to a distinction made between "soft power" — culture, persuasion, the influence of NGOs — and "hard power" — political and military action — as agents of change. More and more, governments must rely on "soft power" to achieve goals, especially in democratic countries. "But soft power emerges and grows in influence only in the context of sound governance, which makes room for it in open societies under the rule of law."

Many leaders in the South and not a few activists betray an attitude of mind that is not only unrealistic but also statist. There is an assumption that if only they wished to do so governments could set arbitrary targets and timelines and meet them by fiat, without reckoning with the reaction of voters to draconian measures that created unemployment. It does not take into account either that the global economy doesn't seem to respond well to state decrees; prosperity can hardly be commanded.

One can understand the U.S. reluctance to accord binding force to global summits like this when one considers the fierce pressure put on by activists and NGOs — supported by Canada and Europe — to insert a healthcare clause insisting on the right of women around the world to easy access to contraception and abortion. To more and more activists, establishing what they consider a just global order involves undermining the values of religion,

including Christianity, which are painted as inherently oppressive and destructive. Only the opposition of the U.S. and Islamic states prevented adoption of the abortion clause, as they insisted on and won recognition that local religious and cultural values must be taken into account.

## Corn donation booted

The degree to which one-sided agendas by anti-global and anti-American activists can take hold is illustrated by the reaction to an American donation of thousands of tons of corn to African countries: it was booted. Why? Because the corn is genetically modified corn, freely consumed in North America without any ill effects. Despite the fact that millions are facing starvation, it is contemptuously rejected by autocratic leaders in Zambia and Zimbabwe, either because they have been convinced by activists that it is poisonous or because they simply wish to defy the U.S.

Prime Minister Chrétien criticized Europe and the U.S. for refusing to budge on their policy of subsidizing their farmers. This makes it impossible for Third World farmers, whose governments cannot afford subsidies, to compete in world markets. Oxfam recently pointed out that if Africa increased its share of such global exports by a mere one per cent, it would gain an additional \$70 billion in income — five times what it now receives in aid.

[This report was written with files from the *National Post*, the *Globe and Mail*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Capital Commentary* and various Internet sources.]

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## Same-sex issue ignites further controversy

... continued from page 9

Crawley refuted a statement by Chung that the church should have only one teaching on same-sex unions. The Canadian archbishop said some thorny church questions should be decided on a regional basis, pointing to positions taken on polygamy in some African countries. Although the Anglican Church formally forbade polygamy, Crawley said, the world communion's 800 bishops had voted in 1988 to allow African churches discretion in dealing with this cultural practice. The decision to

ordain women priests had also been left to national churches to decide, Crawley said.

The issue of same-sex partnerships is expected to come up later this month at a meeting in Hong Kong of the Anglican Consultative Council, which includes the world's 38 primates. Bishop Ingham is one of two ACC leaders scheduled to speak at the event.

The subject is also expected to be on the agenda of the October meeting of the Anglican House of Bishops in Canada.

The issue has ignited further

controversy elsewhere in Canada. A priest in Ontario intends to bring a resolution supporting authorization of same-sex blessings to the diocese of Ottawa in October.

A recent survey suggests that 50 per cent of British Columbians support giving gay and lesbian couples the legal right to marry — a more radical position than a same-sex blessing.

[Comment: It is startling to see how quickly those who uphold the traditional teaching of the church are suddenly characterized as "dissidents." — Editor.]



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## News Comment

## Nose for News



Bert Hielema

**WHAT'S NEW? WHAT DO** people talk about? The weather is always a good topic. So a bit about it is not out of place. Here it goes.

Forests — Drought — Fire. There is an intimate connection between these three natural phenomena. Forests absorb a tremendous amount of water. One single tree can drink in 200 litres of rain in an hour, and the soil around its roots even more! Rain forests, by definition, should not go up in flames at all, but they do so increasingly.

When we cut trees, the sun dries out the moist earth, making it ripe for fire. Blazes create more open spaces and so a fatal cycle is started, as the roots and the leaves no longer sponge up the water, the soil erodes, and floods and landslides become the next headline. Trees have a triple function: they lick up lots of liquid, they act as air conditioners, while the absence of foliage increases the heat reflection and makes the earth hotter, as we well know.

**MOST IMPORTANTLY**, our lungs depend on trees, as they convert carbon dioxide into pure oxygen, something we need every minute. Trees are our indispensable allies in the fight against climate imbalance. No wonder the Bible begins and ends with the life-giving tree. So hug a tree today: in nature they are our best companions.

This year has seen a lot of forest fires. Washington says it is concerned with this vital and crucial part of our ecology, and last week published a policy statement entitled "Healthy Forests," promising a new approach to preventing the Forest — Drought — Fire feedback. The old policy of fire-suppression has led to a dangerous accumulation of highly flammable small trees and underbrush.

**SO WHAT IS THE NEW** answer? The administration proposes to make deals with logging companies, who, in return for clearing out the hazardous stuff, will be given the valuable trees. Considering that in the 2000 election the forest industry gave 82 per cent of its

contributions to Republicans, and considering that the agency to oversee this operation is now run by a former Forest Industry lobbyist, it could indeed be the end of bush fires, just as death is the end of disease. Comments Paul Krugman in the *New York Times*: "Wouldn't it be nice that, just for once the Bush regime would come up with a plan that didn't weaken environmental protection, that didn't give financial breaks for the corporations and that didn't reduce public oversight?"

**IT SADDENS ME THAT** the U.S.A., home to three of our children and eight of our grandchildren, is abdicating its crucial world role in the most important area: the environment. By doing so, it is endangering its position as a global leader. Norbert Walter, chief economist at the Deutsche Bank Group laments: "The most powerful nation of the world increasingly stands to lose its political capital, its moral authority and international good will by dragging its feet on the most pressing issue facing the world: that of the degradation of our natural heritage. The absence of President Bush from Johannesburg symbolizes this decline."

We all read newspapers. We all see television. In Central Europe flooding has killed dozens, displaced thousands and caused billions in damage. In South Asia a brown cloud of pollution is responsible for untold numbers of deaths from respiratory disease. In China thousands are drowned by major floods and millions displaced, ruining farms and the livelihood of tens of thousands of peasants.

**I AM NOT SUGGESTING** that these disasters are directly linked to what we in North America are doing. However, when the U.S.A. emits 26 per cent of the world's greenhouse gases (Bush's Texas' 22 million alone flush as much poison in the air as the world's one billion poor people) but acts as an uninterested, even hostile bystander in the environmental debate, it should come as no

surprise that to the Rest Of the World this looks like arrogance. I know, I sound like a broken record. Forgive me. But I am not the only one.

More and more highly regarded people are expressing their worry. The World Bank's chief economist, Nick Stern, warns in the *International Herald Tribune*: "more people and higher production will lead to environmental catastrophe, social breakdown and lower living standards for everyone.... Developing countries should become more democratic and better managers, the rich countries should share their wealth [Canada's income is 37 times that in the poorest 20], offer more debt relief, open their markets, help transfer technologies to prevent diseases, increase energy efficiency and serve as a voice for the weak and the powerless." In short: the Washington-based World Bank urges us to cut back, act as good Samaritans instead of arrogant bullies, live more simply and share our wealth if we want to survive.

**DESPERATELY NEEDED:** courageous politicians. Or is that an oxymoron? Give Chrétien credit. At last a courageous politician? Well... I give him credit for craftiness rather than courage in announcing that Canada will implement Kyoto, a pact which Stephen Harper calls the worst international treaty ever devised. Kyoto — pronounced "key-auto" which, incidentally, perfectly captures the essence of the pact, as our beloved automobiles are the key to making or breaking our planet — Kyoto will not come into effect until 2012, a decade from now. Let me rephrase that. It is supposed to be fully in place by that time. We can't, on December 31, 2011, say, "Oh, yes, as of tomorrow we have to live on less energy than we did in 1990."

How much less is still an open question. My bet is that, unless we get an outright economic depression or a collapse of the eco-system, nothing much will change. Still, Jean Chrétien committed Canada to this protocol. An easy thing for him to do. In a few months he is history. It will then be up to Paul Martin, Canada's Prime Minister in waiting, to wean us off non-renewable energy, because we are carbophiles, addicted to the use of carbon-based fuels: natural gas, diesel fuel and gasoline, plus the untold other articles made from feedstock, from nylon to fiberglass to almost everything we manufacture nowadays.

**KYOTO, A BEAUTIFUL** old city in Japan, made me think of a little story in the Chinese book of wisdom: the Tao. Two soldiers are rewarded by the emperor each with 25 acres of identical land. The one prospered, the other starved. When the rich man was asked his secret, he replied: "It is not one secret: it's a thousand secrets." That's how I see Kyoto. It's not more nuclear power, not hydrogen or solar power, it is the pursuit of the thousands secrets of saving energy, from simply taking your own bags when shopping, to walking that extra step rather than using the car, to eating just a bit less and exercising just a bit more, to not buying that useless toy, to ... you name it. Kyoto will mean a new mind-set.

Crafty Chrétien has passed the buck. I compare it to a death-bed scene, where the dying father bequeathes to his estranged son (Canada's beloved P.(aul) M.) the obligation to restore the family fortune (our non-renewable resources) which father Jean and his nearest family (the Liberal Party) has squandered.

The Alliance's Harper calls Kyoto a bad document. He, young as he is, thinks in terms of yesterday, marking him a yesterday man and his party a non-starter. Yesterday was all about abundant waste. Tomorrow is about abandoning waste and thinking about what sort of life our grandchildren will have, where "renewable" and "sustainable" will be key words.

Of course Kyoto is far from perfect. Maybe even toothless. With the U.S.A. — 25 per cent of emissions — and the two countries with the largest populations, China and India — another 30 per cent — excluded, greenhouse gases will continue to grow. But it's better than nothing.

It has defined the problem, even though the U.S.A. refuses to see this, which made Jimmy Carter — now there was a courageous politician! — write in the *Washington*

*Post*: "Fundamental changes are taking place in the historical policies of the United States... largely without definitive debates." He laments the radical departure from policies every U.S. administration has followed since 1967, policies involving peace, human rights, the environment and international co-operation, glaringly evident in Johannesburg, where Bush alone among major world leaders, was absent, and where the U.S.A. and OPEC — the Axis of Oil — opposed clear and binding targets to increase the use of solar and wind power.

**WILL THE JOHANNESBURG EARTH SUMMIT** make a difference? Will the 50,000 people who flew in from around the world in pollution-spewing jets (by the way, airplanes are excluded from Kyoto even though jet exhaust is now known to have a significant influence on the weather), who ate expensive food in Africa where millions go hungry and worked out a plan to "Save the Earth," will these thousands of bureaucrats and politicians and businessmen and concerned citizens now sow the seeds of a new society?

No. The summit was a flop. It ignored environmental issues and made no progress on poverty, two of the main reasons why the conference was called. If Johannesburg proved one thing, it clearly showed that, as in churches, so in other gab-fests, the time for preaching is past. "Money on the table" is the only agenda now.

*Bert Hielema lives in Tweed, Ont.*

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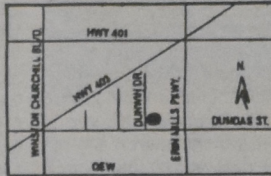
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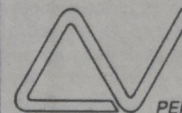
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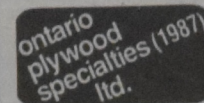
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# Classifieds

Classifieds	Anniversaries	Obituaries
<p>As of May 1999: Note: 7% GST will be added to all prices listed below.</p> <p><b>DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION</b> <i>Christian Courier</i> is published on alternate Mondays. Copy deadline for each issue is 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, thirteen days prior to publication date.</p> <p><b>RATES</b> All personal and family announcements: \$16.00 per column inch (P.I.) + GST (columns are two inches wide). Display advertising re.: businesses and organizations: minimum \$18.20 P.I. + GST, depending on design and frequency.</p> <p><b>PHOTOS</b> There is a processing fee of \$25 for the inclusion of a photograph with a personal or family announcement. Photo space is not charged P.I., but we reserve the right to determine published photo size. Please note that we cannot use a faxed photo. We need either an original (which we will return) or a downloadable Internet image.</p> <p><b>PERSONAL ADS</b> <i>Christian Courier</i> would be pleased to handle your personal ad in an efficient and discreet manner. The cost to set up a personal file under a unique file number is \$35. Ads requesting correspondence with this file are run at \$16 P.I. per insertion. All correspondence is immediately forwarded unopened.</p> <p><b>NEWLYWEDS &amp; NEW PARENTS</b> We offer a \$25 one-year subscription to couples whose wedding is announced in <i>Christian Courier</i> and to parents who announce the birth of a child in our paper. Please let us know when placing your ad that you want to take advantage of this offer.</p> <p><b>SUBMITTING YOUR AD</b> Mail: <i>Christian Courier</i> 1 Hiscott St. St. Catharines, ON L2R 1C7 fax: 905-682-8313 Email: accounts@christiancourier.ca</p> <p><b>OTHER INFORMATION</b> a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format and editing style. b) Please provide us with clear copy. <i>Christian Courier</i> is not responsible for any errors due to hand written or phoned-in advertisements.</p>	<p>1952      October 2      2002 "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness." Psalm 115:1 With praise and thanksgiving to God, we wish to congratulate our parents and grandparents <b>MARKUS and JEAN HOVING</b> (nee Visser) On the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. With love from each of us: Harry Marcia &amp; Richard (fiancé), Jodi, Mark Susanne &amp; Sam Christy, Angela, Lisa Bas &amp; Diane Melissa, Leah George &amp; Joanne Michelle, Leslie, Darryl Bill &amp; Grace Colin, Brittney, Kristen Jane &amp; Harry Adam, Sarah, Rebecca John &amp; Catherine Sheena, Neil Liz &amp; Michael Crystal, Joshua Mike &amp; Tammy Jacob Home address: Tollendale Village, Unit A 105, 271 Tollendale Mill Rd. Barrie, ON L4N 7S6</p> <p>1952      2002 <b>BART and FRANCES HUIZINGA</b> On October 4, 1952 at the Glen Forest CRC in Toronto, Ontario, Bart and Frances were united in Holy Matrimony by Rev. Brondsema. To celebrate this wonderful day, their children and grandchildren would like to honor them with your presence at an open house to be held Saturday, October 5/02 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at: Second Christian Reformed Church 1281 Exmouth St. Sarnia, Ontario. Home address 1071 Jordan Dr. Sarnia, Ontario N7S 1Y3 "He who finds a good wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord" Proverbs 18:22</p> <p>1962      2002 With thanksgiving to God, we celebrate the 40th anniversary of our parents and grandparents, <b>HENRY and ROELIE KATERBERG</b> We extend an invitation to family and friends to attend an open house at the Calvin Christian School, Drayton, on Saturday, October 5th from 2-4pm. Best Wishes Only Please. Congratulations Mom and Dad! Home Address: #14 Conestoga Drive, Drayton, ON N0G 1P0</p> <p>1962      October 5      2002 With joy and thanksgiving, the Lord willing, we hope to celebrate the 40th anniversary of our parents <b>RICHARD and FRANCES VANNETTEN</b> (nee Onessen) of Port Perry Sonya &amp; Ivan Duivesteyn Jared, Kassondra, Alysha, Taryn Jeff &amp; Sonya Vannetten Richard, Kimberly, Andrew Eric &amp; Rachel Vannetten Gresina Open House: Sat. Oct. 5, 8 p.m. at Emmanuel Pentecostal Church, Reach Road, Port Perry, ON</p> <p>1952      October 1      2002 With praise and thanksgiving to God we are happy to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents <b>JOHN and MARY OOTJERS</b> (nee Hoek) We pray that the Lord will continue to bless you and keep you in his care. With love from your children, their spouses and your grandchildren. Nellie &amp; Joe Creech - Clarkston, MI Adrian, Calvin, Terry Andre &amp; Patricia Ootjers Grand Valley, ON Jen, Tom, Chris, Kim, Andrea Diana &amp; Eddy Van Roie - Trenton, ON Lorie &amp; Jason, Matthew &amp; Stephanie Vicky Tracy &amp; Dave Fice - Pontypool, ON Shelly, Amanda John &amp; Karen Ootjers Bowmanville ON Ashley, Ryan Home address: 146 Wilmot Trail, Newcastle, ON L1B 1B9</p> <p>45th Anniversary <b>JACOB and ANNA DEKKER</b> (Bouwsema) Oct 12, 1957, Smithville, Ont. Friends and family are invited to an open house in their honor on Sept. 28, 2002 from 2-4 p.m. at Wellandport Christian School (Wellandport Road and Regional Road 45, Wellandport)</p>	<p><b>DIRK BRINKMAN</b> Oct. 2, 1918      Aug. 22, 2002 "A forward-thinking man, often ahead of his time. A life displayed...by word, spoken, written and sent, and deed, many shovelfuls of dirt. A heart for the good of the greater community. Hands working God's love and reaching into spheres of influence, Family, work and play intertwined through life. He's finally resting." Beloved husband of Alida Catharina. Dear Father of: Dirk &amp; Joyce Wiebe &amp; Jackie John &amp; Susan Joe &amp; Alida Reitsma Simon &amp; Pauline Kendall Honas &amp; Maer George &amp; Irene Andrew Grace June And 34 grandchildren and four great-grand children. Dear brother of Gerritt, Case, Grace Kamper, Barbara Camfferman, Jan and the late Nell de Graaf. Memorial donations may be made to Durham Christian High School, Bowmanville. Job 1:21 "Then he fell to the ground in worship and said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, may the name of the Lord be praised.'" Correspondence may be sent to: Alida C. Brinkman, 200 Glenhill Drive, Whitby, ON L1N 9W2</p> <p><b>GERRIT (GARY) ENDHOVEN</b> Promoted to glory at the Kingston General Hospital on Wednesday, September 4, 2002, Gary Endhoven of Mallorytown, Ontario at age 85 years. Beloved husband of the former Tineke Van Putten. Dear father of Rita Vandenberg (Bill) of Toronto, Ena Rietveld (Henk) of Huntsville, Nellie van Donkersgoed (Elbert) of Guelph, Thea Ouwehand (Gerry) of Mount Hope, Tony Endhoven (Barbara) of Athens. Grandfather of Esther, David, Judy and Majid, Tanya, Eleanor and Steven, Alex and Willena, Cara, Kristel, Raymond, Kerry and Jeff, Sandra and David, Ross, Heidi and Dan. Great grandfather of Tyas, Garrett, Jordan, Shawheen, Shahab, Samuel and Christian. Brother of Miss Dith Endhoven and Mrs. Adri Hogeveen, both of the Netherlands. Predeceased by his first wife Nellie and a son Martin. A Service of Thanksgiving was held on Saturday, September 7, 2002 at Bethel Christian Reformed Church, Brockville. A private interment took place at Oakland Cemetery, Brockville. In memoriams to the Canadian Cancer Society or the Tabitha Foundation (Janne Ritskes' work in Cambodia). Correspondence: 102 Rockfield Road, RR4 Mallorytown, ON K0E 1R0 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new." Revelation 21:5 (NIV)</p> <p>January 6, 1922      August 24, 2002 Emmen      St. Catharines <b>HENRY VANDERMOLLEN</b> On August 24, in His love and grace, the Lord took home to Himself His child, Henry Vandermollen. While we grieve his passing, we also rejoice that he is now in the arms of the Lord. Beloved husband of Frieda. Father, grandfather and great-grandfather of Vic &amp; Nancy Vandermollen Rick &amp; Elizabeth Vandermollen Ethan, James Geoff &amp; Kristin Vandermollen Gillian Dan Vandermollen &amp; Jennifer Corrigan Melanee &amp; Jeff Weening Jane &amp; Frank Vanderbeid Barbara Vanderbeid &amp; Fern Gauthier Jim Vanderbeid &amp; Kerri Paul Jeannie Horodenchuk &amp; Rick Redekop Danielle Horodenchuk The funeral service took place Wednesday, August 28, 2002 at Maranatha CRC, St. Catharines. Correspondence: F. Vandermollen, c/o Heidehof, Rm. 121, 600 Lake Street St. Catharines, ON L2N 4J4</p> <p> "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End." (Rev. 22:13) March 8, 1927      Sept. 4, 2002 Veelerveen,      Sarnia, Ont. the Neth.      Canada <b>CORNELIS (CASE) SENSE DE JONG</b> went home to be with His Lord and Saviour on Wednesday morning, September 4, 2002, after a courageous battle with cancer. Beloved husband of Jannie (nee Fröling). Loving father and grandfather of: Henk &amp; Marg de Jong - Sarnia, Ont. Melissa, Diana, Keith Alice &amp; Brad Pretty - Bright's Grove, Ont. Alicia, Kyle, Carly Joyce &amp; Tony Steadman - Brigden, Ont. Jenna-Marie, Mitchell Beloved brother and brother-in-law of: Truus &amp; John Boot St. Catharines, Ont. Herman &amp; Stiny de Jong Jordan Station, Ont. Sense (Stan) &amp; Corrie de Jong St. Catharines, Ont. Jaap &amp; Mattie de Jong, Hengelo the Netherlands Hennie &amp; John Kuipers Oshawa, Ont. Many nieces and nephews. The funeral service was held on September 7, 2002, at Second Chr. Ref. Church, Sarnia, Ont., with the Rev. Ralph Wigboldus officiating. Correspondence address: 1275 Sandy Lane, # 312, Sarnia (Pt. Edward) ON N7V 4H5</p>
<p><b>Birthday</b>  With joy and thanksgiving to the Lord we look forward to celebrating the 90th birthday on Sept. 23, 2002, of our mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother <b>Geesje Zantingh</b> With much love, Henk Zantingh (Sylvia deceased in 2001) - Sarnia Tina Linker (Bart deceased 2001) - Strathroy Peter &amp; Mary Zantingh - Wyoming Helen &amp; Bob Zylstra - Strathroy And 13 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren Home address: 55-400 Dominion Strathroy, ON N7G 3G8</p>	<p> <b>Obituaries</b> Aug 28, 1914      Aug 26, 2002 Ruijn      Chatham The Netherlands      Ontario Job 19:25 "I know that my Redeemer lives." <b>HENDRIK "HENRI" ZANTINGH</b> of Chatham, passed away on Monday, August 26, 2002. Born in Ruijn, The Netherlands 87 years ago. Surviving are his wife Alice (Appelmek), six sons and four daughters, Jack and Stefke of Dorchester, Steffie and husband Tony Bodini of Chatham, Bert and wife Corrine of Sydney, British Columbia, Hans and wife Brenda of Smithers, British Columbia, Johanna and husband Pat Desaulnier of Chatham, son-in-law Jack Dekker of Chatham, Mike and wife Deeny of Smithers, British Columbia, Clarence and wife Laura of Smithers, British Columbia, Petra and husband George VanKampen of Hamilton, Fred and wife Liz of Chatham, Anita and husband Bert VanderHeide of Chatham, thirty-two grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren. Predeceased by a daughter Jenny Dekker, four brothers and sisters. Funeral service was held at the First Christian Reformed Church, Chatham, Ontario. Correspondence: 40 Elm Street, Apt. 131, Chatham, ON N7M 6A5</p>	



## Classifieds



## Obituary

A shout rings out, a joyful voice:  
"Jerusalem, arise, rejoice!"  
A glorious morning breaks the night;  
The Son of God is risen with might.

## JANET HESSELS

went to be with her Lord and Saviour peacefully on Sunday August 18th, 2002. Born September 14, 1931, Jantje Mulder is survived by her loving husband Gerald and her children: John of Brantford, Tracy and (John) Staring of Mississauga, Ron and (Mary Lou) of Georgetown, Eric of Toronto and six grandchildren.

Following a private family burial, a memorial service was held at the Christian Reformed Church of Georgetown on Thursday August 22, 2002.

Home address: 104 Joseph Street  
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Now death no longer holds a sting;  
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February 23, 1936 - August 27, 2002  
After a long struggle with cancer the Lord took home our beloved brother and brother-in-law

## SYBRAND (SIEP) HOITING

in full assurance that he is with the Lord. Brothers and Sisters:  
Martha & Fred Visser - Townsend ON  
Klaas & Jo Hoiting (both predeceased)  
Lies De Vries & Jaap (predeceased)  
- Toronto ON

Pete & Tena Hoiting - Brampton ON  
Ray & Willy Hoiting - Stoney Creek ON  
Betty & Hank Horinga - Woodstock ON  
Ann & Bernard Evers - Wellandport ON  
The funeral took place on August 29, 2002 at the Maranatha CRC Woodstock ON. Correspondence:  
Dini Hoiting, 69 Neutral Ave.  
Woodstock ON N4T-1S7

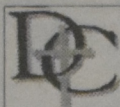
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**4714 Loen Avenue**

**Terrace, BC V8G 1Z7**

**E-mail: pieterhendriks@telus.net**

Deadline for applications to be considered is *October 31, 2002.*

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Email: jongerbo@hurotel.on.ca

Immanuel Christian School of Oshawa, Ontario hopes to celebrate its **40th Anniversary** the weekend of October 18th, 19th and 20th. All former and present students, teachers, parents, and friends are invited to help us celebrate God's faithfulness. For more information contact Trudy Bouma at 905-623-1103 ph/fax, or e-mail: r.bouma@sympatico.ca

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Chr. Reformed Church  
"Rehoboth"

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## Miscellaneous

### The Hugh and Eve Meeter Calvinism Awards for High School Seniors

Awards are given annually for research papers on the topics selected by the Calvinism Committee. The 2003 topic:

#### John Calvin's View of What It Means to Be Human

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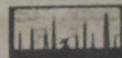
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For research paper guidelines and further information, request the Meeter Award Brochure \* from The H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary, 3201 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546 USA, tel. 616-957-7081.

Deadline for completed papers: January 15, 2003

\* Brochures have also been sent to high schools associated with Christian Schools International.

## THE BACK TO GOD HOUR



### English Radio:

#### Back to God Hour

##### BRITISH COLUMBIA

Burns Lake - CFLD	9:15 am	1400
Osoyoos - CJOR	8:00 am	1490
Penticton - CKOR	8:00 am	800
Port Alberni - CJAV	7:00 pm	1240
Prince George - CIRX	7:00 am	94.3
Princeton - CHOR	8:00 am	1400
Smithers - CFBV	9:15 am	1230
Summerland - CHOR	8:00 am	1450
Vernon - CJIB	9:30 pm	940

##### ALBERTA

Brooks - CIBQ	8:30 am	1340
Ft. McMurray - CJOK	8:30 am	1230
High River - CHRB	6:30 pm	1140
Edmonton - CJCA	6:00 pm	930
Westlock - CFOK	7:30 am	1370

##### SASKATCHEWAN

Estevan - CJSL	8:00 am	1280
Weyburn - CFSL	8:00 am	1190

##### MANITOBA

Altona - CFAM	9:30 am	950
Steinbach - CHSM	9:30 am	1250
Winnipeg - CKJS	9:00 am	810

##### ONTARIO

Atikokan - CFAK	9:30 am	1240
Chatham - CFCO	6:30 am	630
Fort Frances - CFOB	9:30 am	640
Guelph - CJOY	8:30 am	1460
Hamilton - CHAM	7:30 am	820
Kapuskasing - CKAP	7:00 am	580

### FROM COAST TO COAST

London - CKSL	7:00 am	1410
Newmarket - CKDX	9:00 am	88.5
Oshawa - CKDO	8:00 am	1350
Owen Sound - CFOS	7:00 am	560
Pembroke - CHVR	10:00 am	96.7
Sarnia - CHOK	7:30 am	1070
Stratford - CJCS	8:45 am	1240
Windsor - CKLW	7:30 am	800
Wingham - KKNX	10:30 am	920
<b>NEW BRUNSWICK</b>		
Saint John - CHSJ	9:00 am	94.1

##### PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown - CFCY	7:00 am	630
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##### NOVA SCOTIA

Bridgewater - CKBW	7:30 am	1000
Digby - CKDY	6:00 am	1420
Halifax - CFRD	8:30 am	780
Liverpool - CKBW	7:30 am	94.5
Kentville - CKEN	8:30 am	1490
Middleton - CKAD	8:30 am	1350
New Glasgow - CKEC	7:30 am	1320
Shelburne - CKBW	7:30 am	93.1
Sydney - CJCB	7:00 am	1270
Weymouth - CKDY	8:30 am	103.1
Windsor - CFAB	8:30 am	1450

##### KIDS CORNER RADIO

Drayton Valley AB - CIBW	8:30 am Sunday	92.9 FM
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Rocky Mtn. House AB - CHBW	8:30 am Sunday	94.5 FM
Prince Rupert BC - CJRN	10 am Saturday	100.7 FM

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##### MOUNTAIN - AB

3 pm Sunday

##### CENTRAL - SK

& MB - 4 pm Sun.

##### EASTERN - ON

& PQ - 5 pm Sun.

##### ATLANTIC - NB,

NS, PEI - 6pm Sun

##### NFLD - 6:30 Sun.

Our Address: 3475 Mainway PO Box 5070 Stn LCD1 Burlington ON L7R 3Y8



## Classifieds

## Miscellaneous

## CANADIAN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOUNDATION INC. ANNOUNCEMENT



Menno Eelkema, President, shaking hands and presenting Executive Director Fred Vander Velde with a farewell gift.

After 27 faithful years of full-time services as our Executive Director, Mr. Fred R. Vander Velde, has decided to retire.

As board we are however pleased to announce that he has agreed to stay on for at least part-time. The CCEF administration and office will remain in Burlington, Ontario at his residence.

The volunteer board members will continue to raise and fund the necessary development of Christian textbooks with your financial help.

The CCEF is an independant Foundation, it reports regularly to the CSI board, Audit Reports are filed each year with Revenue Canada, and the Synod of the CRC.

CCEF is a member of the following organizations:

- Christian Stewardship Services (CCS Inc., since 1985)
- Canadian Centre of Philanthropy
- Associate member within the Canadian Council of Christian Charities (CCCC), our tax deductible No./BN11883-0207-RR0001

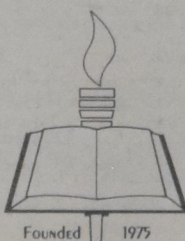
Menno Eelkema, President

CANADIAN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOUNDATION INC. Board of Directors

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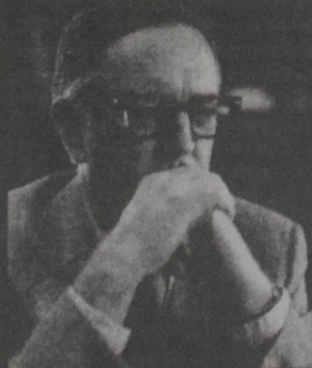
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## Event

*You are cordially invited  
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celebrating the life and legacy of*

**H. Evan Runner**

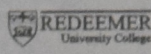
October 4, 7:30 pm  
Redeemer University College,  
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H. Evan Runner was a figure whose influence was not only significant to Christian education but to many reformed Christian organizations in North America. This event will feature a meditation by Calvin Seerveld, and tributes from representatives of several organizations such as the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC), Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), the Christian Teachers' Association (OCSTA) and the Christian Reformed Church clergy. This event is scheduled in conjunction with a two-day conference sponsored by six institutions of Christian higher education. For more information contact Chris Cuthill at the Institute for Christian Studies: ccuthill@icscanada.edu or 416-979-2331 ext 225.

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Mr. Dan Emonts  
Chairperson - Search Committee  
Tel: (519) 425-0968  
Fax: (519) 425-1606

Or Mr. Dick Hensen  
Clerk - Search Committee  
Email: dickhensen@sympatico.ca  
Tel: (519) 425-1970



## Events/Advertising

## Calendar of Events

Items Appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

- Sep 18 Classis Niagara meeting 4 p.m. at Providence CRC, Beamsville, Ont. See this issue for details.
- Sep 20 Liberation Choir, Fall tour, 8 p.m. Second CRC, Brampton. See ad for details.
- Sep 21 Liberation Choir, Fall tour, 8 p.m. First CRC, London. See ad.
- Sep 28 Celebrating 50 years in ministry. Rev. W. Buurisma at Strathroy East CRC. Ph: 519-245-0454
- Sep 29 Rev. Henry R. De Bolster will celebrate, D.V., his 40th anniversary in the ministry with a special worship service of thanksgiving and praise to be held at Mount Hamilton CRC. 9:30 a.m.
- Oct 5,6 Bethel CRC of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan 50th anniversary. Contact Betty Veltkamp, 302-510th Ave. N. Saskatoon, SK S7K 2R2 or email: bveltkamp@sasktel.net
- Oct 5,6 Blyth CRC, Blyth, Ontario will celebrate its 40th anniversary. Breakfast & social Oct. 5, commemorative worship services, Oct. 6. See this issue for more info.
- Oct. 11 Experimental Concert, 8 pm St. Catharines, St. Denis Roman Cath. Church. See ad this issue
- Oct 12 Experimental Concert, 8 pm. Brampton, Emmanuel CRC. See ad this issue.
- Oct 18 Liberation Choir, Fall tour, 8 p.m. Our Lady Immaculate R. Cath. Church, Guelph. See ad.
- Oct 19 Liberation Choir, Fall tour, 8 p.m. Rehoboth United Ref. Church, Hamilton
- Oct 19 Organ, Piano, and Flute concert series, Bowmanville, Rehoboth CRC. See ad this issue.
- Oct 19 A Day of Encouragement and training for deacons, elders and other caregivers at Hamilton District Christian High School in Ancaster. Theme: "Go out in Joy!" Featuring 50 workshops including special sessions for elders and caregivers. Cost: \$45. Contact your deacons for a registration form, or Diaconal Ministries at 905-336-2920 or at www.diaconalministries.com.
- Oct 18,19 Immanuel Christian School, Oshawa, Ont. 40th Anniversary. For event info, contact Trudy Bouma at 905-623-1103 or email: r.bouma@sympatico.ca
- Oct 19,20 First CRC of Chilliwick B.C. 50th anniversary. For info & billeting: call Erna Maarhuis 604-794-7140 or e-mail: pjonda@telus.net
- Oct 24 Organ, Piano and Flute Concert, Owen Sound, Canadian Ref. Church. See ad this issue
- Oct 25 Organ, Piano and Flute Concert, Burlington, Ebenezer Canadian Ref. Church. See ad.
- Oct 26 CRWRC 40th Anniversary Celebration at 7:30 PM at Brampton 2nd CRC, Steeles Ave(W). Presentations by DRS, Relief and Development. Please join us! Call Peter at 905-542-5271
- Oct 26 Organ, Piano and Flute concert, York CRC. See ad for more info.
- Oct 26 CLAC 50th Anniversary Celebration. Dr. Calvin Seerveld keynote speaker, Hamilton District Christian High. For further information, call Pauline at 905-945-1500.
- Oct 26 Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir - 7:30 p.m. at Grace Reformed Church, 514 George St., Dunnville. Freewill offering. (519) 637-4357
- Oct 26,27 Rehoboth CRC, Niagara Falls, 50th Anniversary weekend of praise, fellowship. For more information, call Michael Havinga 905-358-3534 or mhavinga@becon.org
- Nov 1 Christian Festival Concert under the direction of Leendart Kooij in Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto \$28/\$21/\$16. Call 416-636-9779
- Nov 5 The Annual 2002 Church & the Law Seminar will be held on Tues., Nov. 5th, 2002 at Bramalea Baptist Church, Bramalea located in Greater Toronto. This year's theme is "Essential Legal Issues for Churches & Religious Charities". Registration forms are available at www.charitylaw.ca and the host, Carter & Associates, ph: (519) 942-0001, Fax: (519) 942-0300 or email: seminars@charitylaw.ca.
- Nov 8 Music to Delight: A program of music with soprano soloist Renée Stalenboef, organist Ian Sadler, the Harboursaires from Goderich, the Men of Note from Clinton, at Clinton CRC, 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$10, Children \$5. For information, call 519-482-5372.
- Nov 16 Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir - 7:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 60 Fifth St., Chatham. Also featuring Soloist Elisabeth Enzlin and Chatham-Kent Male Chorus. Sponsored by Chatham Christian Schools. Freewill offering. (519) 352-4980
- Nov 9 Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS) 50th Anniversary, Celebrating Pioneers and Visionaries, Oakville Conference Centre. Contact the OACS at 905-648-2100 or oacs@oacs.org to reserve your place.
- Nov 16 Liberation Choir, Fall tour. 8 p.m. Ebenezer Christian Ref. Church, Trenton See Ad.
- Jan 17 Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir - 7:30 p.m. at First CRC, 181 Charlton Ave, Hamilton. Sponsored by World Wide Christian Schools. Freewill offering. (905) 765-5623
- Jan 18 Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Crescendo Male Choir - 7:30 p.m. at Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church, 130 Scugog St., Bowmanville. Freewill offering (519) 637-4357

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Sat. Sept. 21, First Christian Ref. Church  
507 Talbot St. **London**

Fri., Oct. 18, Our Lady Immaculate Roman Cath. Church  
28 Norfolk St., **Guelph**

Sat. Oct. 19, Rehoboth United Ref. Church  
77 Glancaster Rd., **Hamilton**

Sat. Nov. 16, Ebenezer Christian Ref. Church  
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Concerts start at 8 p.m. For information, call Grace at  
905-457-2348. Tickets \$10.00 available at the door.



Redeemer University College  
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**Dr. Jacob P. Ellens**

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You are warmly invited to attend  
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Reception will follow.

His inaugural address is entitled:  
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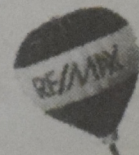
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## News

# Trained interim pastors help churches face transition challenges

Alan Doerksen

PONOKA, Alta. — Churches going through an interim time between ministers face many challenges, such as grieving over a pastor who is missed, or trying to find an identity and direction for the congregation. Pastor-Church Relations (PCR), an office of the Christian Reformed Church, is working to help churches deal with these situations and move onward.

Twenty years ago, the CRC established PCR to encourage pastors and congregations, with the goal of intervening where there were tensions, and setting up preventative programs to improve relationships. That included the appointment of regional pastors in each classis to support local pastors. PCR also provides the Ministerial Information Service (MIS) — which has 637 minister profiles on file — to help congregations call new pastors.

More recently, PCR hired six interim pastors to serve congregations in transition. This enables each congregation to refocus its mission and vision for a period of about a year before calling another pastor, according to the PCR web-page.

Currently, two of these interim pastors are serving churches in Canada, reports Rev. Duane Visser, director of PCR. The other four pastors serve American congregations. These six pastors are "trained with dealing with transition issues," explains Visser. "A misunderstanding is that they only work with troubled churches."

## Grief and anxiety

PCR does deal with crisis situations in churches. But many churches face a variety of different challenges they must deal with while searching for a new pastor. For instance, after a long pastorate, a church "might be doing some grieving," says Visser. Grief and anxiety can also arise because of a bad experience which is unresolved. Interim pastors connected with PCR are trained to help congregations deal with and move on from these situations.

After a pastor leaves, there are sometimes other leadership changes within a church, Visser notes.

Interim pastors can also help congregations learn from things they've done in the past and ask



Rev. Duane Visser, director of PCR.

themselves "Where do we go from here?" he explains.

Often, if a church has experienced a trauma, or even enters a vacancy after a long pastorate, there is a breakdown in the lines of communication within the church. The interim pastor has the skills to help with structures, processes, procedures and to clear the channels of communication.

"In the CRC today, it usually takes a long time to get a pastor," observes Visser. "One of the main factors is process" — because pastoral search committees are doing more research than they used to. Visser sees this as a positive thing.

The interim pastors connected with PCR are hired by that agency and work for the denomination, explains Visser. At least once a year, Visser visits the churches where the six interim pastors are working. And periodically, once a year or more, he gets together with all six of them.

Visser says PCR aims "to try to assist congregations and pastors work more effectively with one another."

## Interim work in Alberta

Rev. Melle Pool is one of two interim pastors trained by PCR who are working in Canada. Pool currently pastors Sonrise CRC in Ponoka, Alta. Before that, he did interim work at Ebenezer CRC in Leduc, Alta. He was trained in interim work by the Intentional Interim Ministry Network (IIMN), an ecumenical agency not connected with the CRC. PCR funds this type of training.

Pool observes, "I think the most important piece of training encourages us to understand churches as systems." That is, everyone in a congregation affects each other "for good or ill," he says. "We are so intricately interwoven with each

other.... Once you begin to understand that, you can see where some adjustments need to be made." Pool was also trained in conflict management. "My approach is very much bringing people together to talk," he says.

Reflecting on his experience in interim ministry, Pool says, "I have identified a number of areas in which churches need to rethink how they function." One is with performance evaluation of pastors. These should be "more life-giving. In some cases, it tends to be more negative."

Both congregations and pastors need to have more self-awareness, Pool contends. "One of the things I do is help churches develop a sense of self and character. We live in a time of ecclesiastical change. We're losing sight of our roots."

## Who am I?

Pastors also need to ask, "Who am I, and where do I fit?" suggests Pool.

Pool sees an interim period at a church as being "intentionally meant to be a time of healing and refocusing." Interim times are absolutely important for churches, he says, because "it's always good for a church to sit back for awhile and think this through: what are our hopes and expectations? These kinds of questions need to be asked."

Rev. Allan Groen is another interim pastor connected with PCR. He currently works with Covenant CRC in St. Catharines, Ont., where he has been for about 10 months. He explains that PCR's interim ministry focus is quite new. Synod 1999 approved it, and this ministry started in 2000. Groen was one of the first PCR interim pastors, starting work with First CRC in London, Ont., before working with Covenant.

One challenge Groen and other interims face is "we try to respond to a church as it exists locally," he explains. "What we try to do depends on the local situation. First you decide together [with the congregation] what are the issues this particular church needs to work on?"

As Groen sees it, there are several basic tasks that churches going through an interim period need to work on. One is "coming to terms with the past. A past you haven't



Rev. Melle Pool

dealt with hangs over you, for better or worse. There can sometimes be a nostalgia for the past." An example of this is a church which has just lost a popular pastor. Or, on the other hand, "there may be reconciliation issues or guilt issues" for a church to deal with.

Like Pool, Groen says a church needs to sort out its identity. That will help determine what type of new pastor the church should look for. "The kind of person you need for the future depends on what the Lord is calling you to do."

## Structures get in the way

Some churches are not well-organized, and that needs to be examined. "Sometimes structures get in the way of what you need, to get work done," notes Groen.

There can also be the question of how well a congregation connects with its denomination. Some churches might feel distant from their denomination's "Jerusalem" — which would mean Grand Rapids, Mich., for the CRC. These churches might have problems with "sending money off to 'Jerusalem.'"

"If a church has been through bad times, they could also have stewardship problems," says Groen. He finds interim ministry rewarding. "It's a neat opportunity. We find some churches are really open to looking at themselves. That's neat to see."

An effective interim pastor can also increase the potential for the next pastor's ministry, suggests the PCR office. The interim pastor is always mindful of the coming of a new pastor and is helping prepare the way for that day. By dealing with and helping resolve issues and concerns in the church, the interim helps make the burden lighter for the new pastor.

## News Digest

### That's using your head

DE WITT, Iowa (AP) — Jeff Swanson is using his head as a billboard. Swanson, 39, is offering to let an advertiser tattoo his head for \$100,000. He listed his offer twice on the Internet auction site eBay, and says at least one person has already called to express interest.

"I thought if the right person saw it and they had that kind of money, they might try to do it, maybe to get some publicity for themselves," said Swanson, who hangs hollow metal doors for a Davenport company.

The tattoo, which he would expose for a year, would be a first for the father of four young boys, who said he could invest part of the money for his children's college education.

### Chickens in the city

ATLANTA, Georgia — "City folk are turning to chickens," writes Danny Flanders in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, as reported in the *Globe and Mail*. "not just as child-friendly pets, but as garden accessories — call them live yard art — at a time when the mere glimpse of a few fat birds pattering around in the petunias lays a big smile on their faces. Call it the simple life. Credit the fresh eggs. Regardless, chickens are flying high, not just in Atlanta but across the country. Sales of chickens to [U.S.] urban residents by one of the country's largest breeders are up 25 per cent."

### Feathering their nests

ARIZONA — City birds prefer wealthier postal codes, according to researchers from Arizona State University. Researchers studied the variety and abundance of birds in 15 small community parks and found that the richest neighborhoods had the largest and most diverse bird populations, report *The Week* and the *Globe and Mail*. Poor neighborhoods had the fewest birds and fewest species — even when they had a greater variety of trees.

Since the parks in wealthy areas did not have superior vegetation, "whatever people are doing is having an influence," says ecologist Ann Kinzig, "because we can't explain it with the park itself."

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